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Henry V.
Shakespeare, William - Character.

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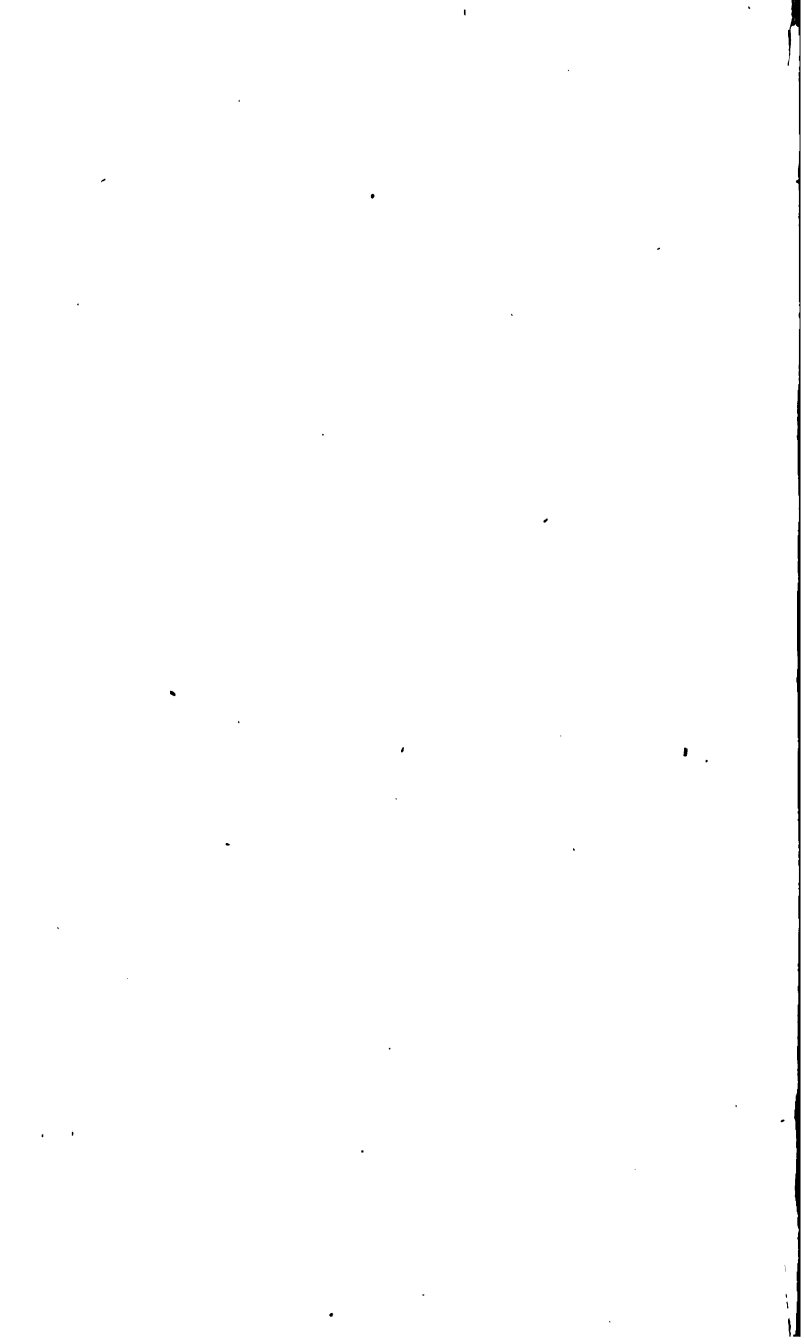


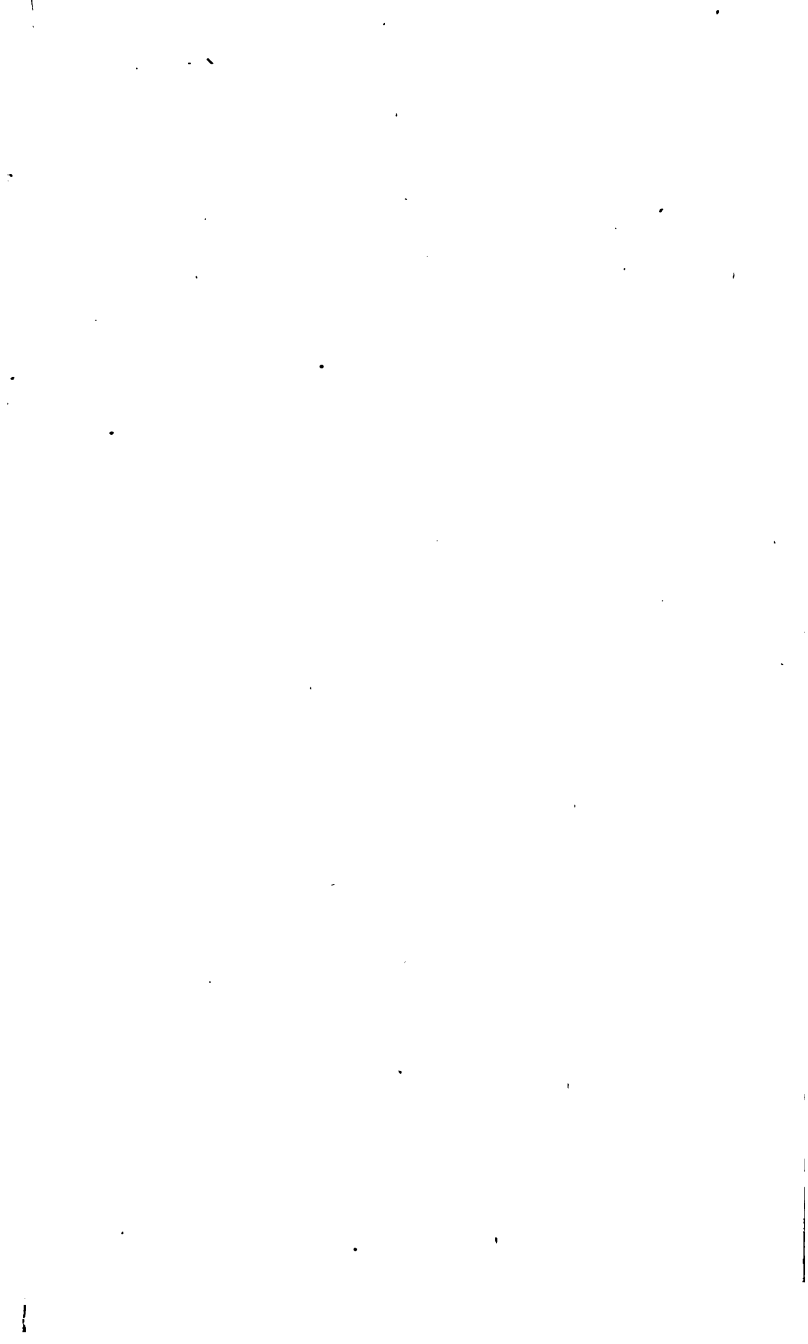
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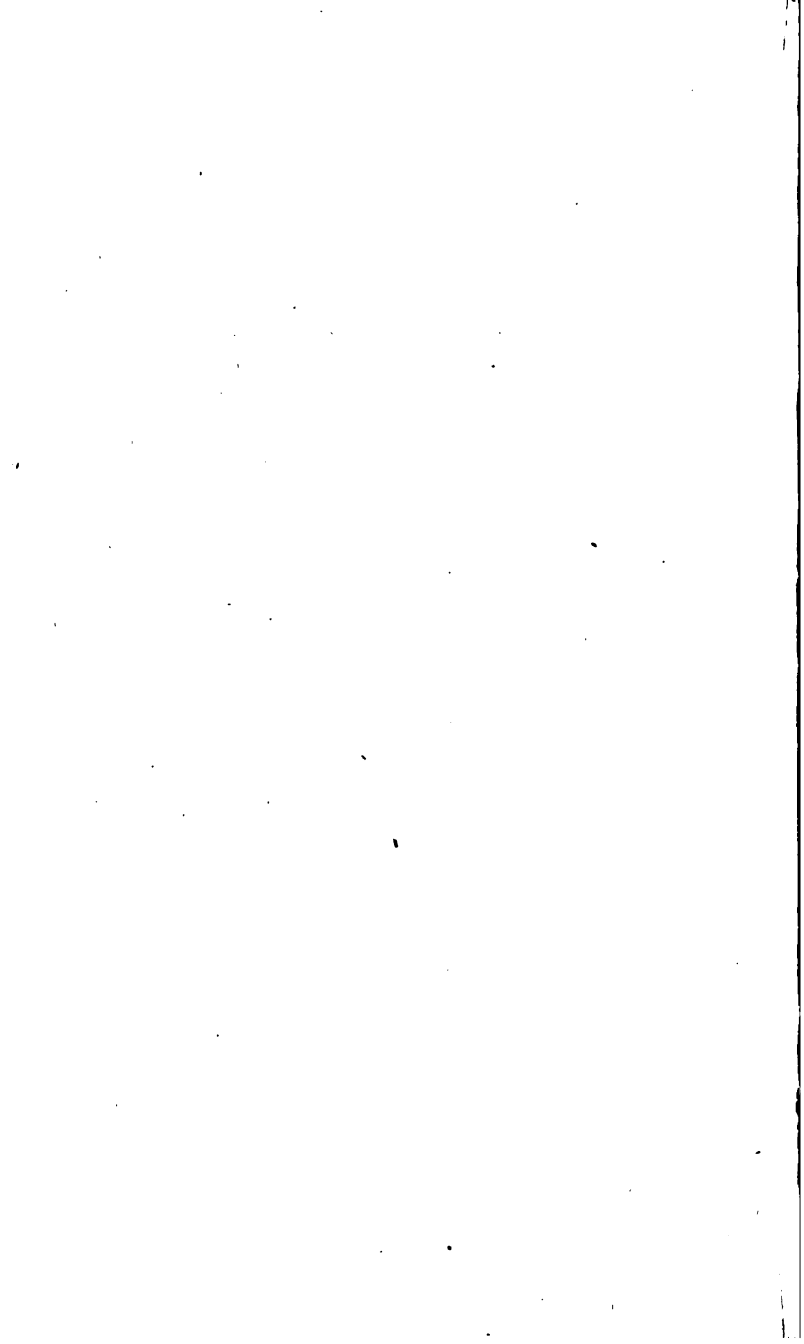
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*The **Knighting** of Prince Henry of Monmouth*

*by Richard 2.^d ——— **Mss. Harl. 1319.***

AN
ESSAY

ON THE

CHARACTER OF HENRY THE FIFTH

WHEN PRINCE OF WALES.

BY
ALEXANDER LUDERS, Esq.

London :

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ON THE
CHARACTER OF HENRY THE FIFTH,
WHEN
PRINCE OF WALES.

INTRODUCTION.

I SHALL endeavour to regain the truth of history for the character of this great Prince in his youth, because it has been hidden in obscurity, or represented in fable. Not having been able to find sufficient authority for the wanton and dissolute character assigned to him in the plays of Shakespear, and that older play which he seems to have followed, I suspect that they are almost as fabulous as Ovid's Metamorphoses. What is to be found in real and authentick history

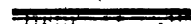
is so inconsistent with those scenes, that I believe, if one of that generation could revive, and behold the person represented on our stage for young Henry of Monmouth, he would be as much puzzled to know him there, as to trace Daphne in the laurel. Yet the earliest chroniclers of those times agree in their story of the young man's excesses; although they relate no particular facts, as some of their followers do.

Theatrical and poetical perversions of history are, indeed, very common, and being generally innocent are forgiven or unnoticed. Either the audience and readers are not knowing enough to discover them, or their effect is not lasting; and they are seldom carried so far as to give a wrong turn to our judgment of well-known events or characters. But in the present instance, the fame and genius of the poet, and the popularity of his scenes, have perverted our national history in an important article:

So deeply, that I fear it will be thought a vain attempt to shew his error and remove its impressions. I want to dispell a mist that his delicate hand has made us wish to keep before our eyes; and must raise a contention between two great favourites of the nation, the Prince and Shakespear. It shall be my study to carry it on without offending their admirers; to distinguish the prince of history from the prince of poetry, and the natural character from the work of art. And so to clean away the tarnish from one of the brightest ornaments of the English throne, that our hero's glory may become more splendid, without lessening the poet's fame.

His character of Falstaff has been received, without any doubt, for a work of invention: but that of the dissolute young prince as his companion, has generally passed for true; not only with those who hear or read the plays, but with those also whose duty it is to in-

quire into the truth of what they relate, our historians. It is for them my correction is intended. But I would leave the theatre in full possession of its delight, and be ready to join its votaries there in exclaiming *Errare malim.*



SECTION I.

Of the Prince's earliest and Military History.

BEING unable to find authorities for the dramattick character, I shall present the reader with such as may make him acquainted with the real one. The old chroniclers in English, as Fabian, Hall, Grafton, Holinshed, Stow, and Speed, take their tale one from another, of the young man's sudden change of character, upon his accession to the throne; when, in the words of Shakespear,

" Consideration, like an Angel, came
And whipt th' offending Adam out of him."

Every one of them seems to believe implicitly in this original sin of the hero; and therefore takes no pains to inquire into the fact, or to account for it, or to refer to his authority. And the moderns all have been equally careless. Goodwin who wrote a long history of Henry the fifth's *reign*, confined himself strictly to that period, and was afraid to go beyond it; except to shew his expectation of producing no good by the inquiry.

I shall lead the reader up to the source from whence they must have derived their opinions; beginning with the writer who lived nearest to the time in question. Premising that the only book I know, in which any one has ventured to declare his doubt of this uniform consent, or to intimate a contrary opinion, is the Parliamentary History of

England. The author of that part of it which treats of this period, in two places expresses a suspicion of the truth of the prevailing notion.* He considers the censures of the old chroniclers and their copiers, to be very inconsistent with the character which the Prince had obtained from the parliaments of his father's reign, for his valour and prudence: And that if he had been guilty of the levities he is accused of, he would not have been made President of the Council.

The first of the chroniclers, Thomas Elmham prior of Lenton, may be called a contemporary of Henry the fourth rather than of his son; but he outlived both, and wrote the life of Henry the fifth at great length, in a verbose and flourishing style of Latin, and with abundance of praise. It was published by Hearne. His sixth chapter

* Vol. ii. Pp. 112, 126.

has the following title, “**Of the Prince's natural temper and disposition, and behaviour in his youth.*” Here, after relating an extraordinary instance of his activity and swiftness of foot, (it is the outrunning a deer,) he describes him thus, “—much given to lasciviousness, and very fond of musical instruments. Passing the bounds of modesty, and burning with the fire of youth, he was eager in the pursuit of Venus as of Mars. When not engaged in military exercises, he also indulged in other excesses which unrestrained youth is apt to fall into. If these things here introduced among others, should be thought worthy of perusal and of a place in history, it depends on the judgment of discreet readers to give them place or not. If not, such cloudy passages may well be buried in obscurity and silence. But the author's reason for alluding to them, is

in order to afford matter of rejoicing to those who shall read what is to come, by presenting the sudden change of night into day, of a cloud into clear sky, of an eclipse into perfect splendour, of darkness into light. Lo, the time is at hand, when, upon the vanishing of a cloud, the solar rays will dart forth,"—&c. Such is the author's style. His next chapter contains a tale of Henry the fourth's calling his son to his bed-side, when at the point of death, in order to kiss and bless him as Isaac did Jacob, and of the Prince's retiring to penitent reflections like the prodigal son; and then "the left hand becomes the right by a happy miracle," which concludes the chapter.

He writes without noticing dates or once mentioning the Prince's age. Imputes the victory at Shrewsbury to his valour; which, if true, is the most extraordinary event of his life: For he was at that time not quite sixteen years old. Relates his appointment to the

chief place in council, as having been made in consequence of the aid he sent to the Duke of Burgundy. That he studied to comply in all things with his father; and, though a strong party at court had endeavoured to slander him to the king, and detract from his merit, yet that the king died blessing him. The passage is too curious to be passed lightly over. Young Henry is made to retire to confession, after receiving the benediction, where "all alone, he revolves and brings back in bitterness of spirit, with sharp reflections and a contrite heart, the past years of his youth;" concluding with a fine speech of intended reformation; (*which none but the Muse could hear,*) and "shedding a river of tears that flowed through the whole day." At night, and while the stream still flowed, he finds out a holy man to give him absolution, from whence he returns "decently adorned with a robe of Virtues."*

* Edit. Hearne, p. 42.

Then comes on (after many wise sayings and doings of his) the feast of the coronation, in which the young man will not partake; for he resolutely betakes himself to fasting for three days and nights, that he may have time for reflecting coolly upon his exalted station. All which the author would have his readers believe upon the faith of *very credible testimony*, which had induced him to write it. Then, in the next chapter, (8th) the nobility who before were afraid of his accession, appear to have undergone the same sort of conversion as he, and by the same sudden impulse; for they immediately make him an offer to swear allegiance, by a precipitate and unusual mark of regard and unprecedented ceremony, and are delighted to think of him for their king. Not a word here of his old companions, or of their dismissal.

It is not easy to get through such a book with seriousness, or to select what

should pass for truth, and what for fable. Yet it must be supposed that our author wrote according to the current opinions of his time; and his rank and character enabled him to converse with persons capable of giving him proper information. An expression in his preface shews, that he did not write of the Prince's extravagancies without reflection; for he introduces a parenthesis to inform us "that they did not *even for a moment* let down the magnanimity of his character." He writes as if they had happened before he came to manhood; inconsistent as that is with the opinion he inculcates of their continuing to the death-bed scene, and its wonderful operation upon them.

The next writer is an Italian, who has generally been called by us Titus Livius.*

* I should from his own expressions have inferred this to have been his Italian christian name. The title prefixed to his book is *Titus Livius à Frulovisiis, Ferrariensis*; and some have made it to be *Forojulien-*

He too wrote the life of Henry the fifth, which he addressed to Henry the sixth; having composed it by command of the Duke of Gloucester, under whose protection he lived. This has been likewise published by Hearne. It is evidently formed out of Elmham's, or else both writers used some other work in common that has not been preserved. He compresses his original's long descriptions and phrases into a better style, omitting some passages and adding others; and on the whole has made a better book and more credible history. It contains many mistakes, however, and internal evidence of his being a foreigner, as he has described himself.

After a prefatory address to Henry the sixth, then in his youth, with which the book begins, the narrative proceeds as follows, as I translate it:

“ The Welsh entertained hopes, *de-sis*, but without reason. Dr. Henry, I know not why, thought it an assumed name.

rived as they said from one of their old prophecies, that a prince would be born in their country who should govern the whole realm of England; which has been fulfilled by the birth of Henry the fifth in that land. During the life of his father, then Duke of Hereford, he was brought up in the king's palace, and honourably and suitably maintained by king Richard, whose favour he enjoyed together with that of all the courtiers. The king frequently spoke of him in publick in his court to this effect; namely, That he had always heard it reported from his ancestors, that there would be one of the name of Henry born among his kindred, who would be celebrated all over the world for his praiseworthy and glorious deeds; which person he verily believed this prince to be. For this cause, upon the breaking out of the rebellion of the Irish, he accompanied the King in that expedition, that

he might acquire the knowledge and exercise of arms.

When the Duke his father first returned from banishment, he was raised to the throne after the death of Richard, as the law ordained. Afterwards, when he marched into Scotland to war, he gave the command of the largest division of his army to this Henry his son, whose qualities then began to appear. After this there happened a great insurrection in England itself towards the north; and he accompanied his father there to suppress the rebellion. A large body of the rebels assembled in arms at Shrewsbury; against whom the father and son fought a long, hard, and bloody battle, in which the valour of this Henry the Prince was highly distinguished. Here, while exerting himself strenuously and with too little caution in the fight, he was wounded in the face with an arrow, and it was thought that his life was in danger. But when

they would have led him off the field, he said " With what spirit will the rest fight, if they see me their prince, and son of the king, retiring in fear? Lead me wounded as I am into the foremost rank, that I may encourage our fellow soldiers not by words but deeds, as becomes a prince." And forthwith he made a bolder attack than before upon the enemy.*

The battle lasted long, and the loss was great on both sides; but when Henry Percy was slain, who was at the head of the conspiracy, it ended with a complete victory on the King's side. Many Welshmen, indeed the greater part of the men of that country, entered into the rebellion; and while it lasted, the King laid waste their lands with fire and sword. The King's son Prince Henry, being appointed to command in this war, destroyed the enemy and rebels,

* In this passage either the book or the copy is imperfect, and could not be exactly translated.

partly in battles, and partly by military execution. Others were driven into strong holds; one of which, a castle of very great strength at Aberystwith, contained a large number of them. Thither the aforesaid Prince marched with a great store of engines and instruments for a siege, and after great labour and expence, and suffering much from the severity of the season and poverty of the country, obtained possession of the castle. And together with that the rest of Wales was restored to the dominion of his father; except one Owen the chief of the Welsh, who from fear and consciousness of his offences, after lurking about in caves and desert places by himself, at length ended his days there. The son of this Owen afterwards became a menial servant to King Henry. And thus much may suffice for the wars of Wales, whereof very certain information has not been obtained.

In the mean time John Duke of Bur-

gundy had suffered so much by a war with the Duke of Orleans, that he was obliged to seek aid in England from this Prince Henry ; who, with his father's permission, sent some of his troops into France to assist the Duke of Burgundy, through whom he obtained the victory. For which cause the Prince was cherished and gratefully received by his father and the King's council ; although there were some who detracted from his fame on this occasion.

This Prince was in stature beyond the middle size, of a handsome face, long neck, slender person, and neat limbs, yet of wonderful strength and swiftness in running ; insomuch that without dogs or bow, with two attendants only, he could catch that swiftest of beasts the deer. He took delight in musick, but in feats of the chace or military exercises was moderate, as well as in other amusements of that kind during the King his father's time.

And now the end of his father's life approached, and he received from him, after service to God in due form before the altar, and with prayers, the blessing of a father. While he was dying, Prince Henry as one about to succeed to the throne, calling for a priest of good name, made confession of his past offences, and thoroughly amended his life and conversation; so that after his father's death there was no passage of wantonness ever escaped him.

To this great Prince the nobles upon his becoming King made an offer of swearing fealty, in their publick assembly of the realm which they call parliament, after the third day and before he was crowned and had taken the oath to govern well, of which there had been no example before to any Prince of England. After giving them due thanks, he exhorted them to regard the honour and welfare of the state; and if any man were offended in him, he

would remit all things to all, beseeching God "if he should be pleased to grant his grace to promote the honour and safety of the kingdom, that then he would grant him to be crowned ; but if not, that he might rather be buried."

After this the author proceeds to relate the coronation, and goes on with the events of the reign.

These two writers professed to write the King's life, and therefore would deserve more consideration than others, even if they had not lived in the times they treat of. But this latter circumstance is perhaps the weightiest as to the merit of their works. T. Livius, the humble servant of the Duke of Gloucester his hero's brother, may perhaps be pardoned for passing over what he thought blamable in his youthful years; yet it is plain that he had heard of such passages, and believed them true. But from Elmham we ought to

have had particulars, if they were indeed such as he leads us to suppose.

A little attention to dates, and to the events of the Prince's youth, as they are to be found in the records of the time, has led me to think lightly of the imputation cast upon him, and that it is as much overcharged, as the account of his reformation is manifestly fabulous. Before I quit these authors, it is proper to notice that Archbishop Parker* has passed a censure upon T. Livius for making but a lame history, and for not acknowledging Elmham for his original, in which censure Hearne† does not agree; and that Holinshed supposed Elmham to have copied Livius, (*into a certain poetical kind of writing,*) in which he is certainly mistaken.

There are three other writers of the English history who were likewise contemporary with these reigns, namely,

* In Preface to Walsingham.

† Preface to Tit. Liv. and Preface to Elm. p. 12.

Otterburn, Hardyng, and Walsingham. The work of the former is a meagre account of events, and ends abruptly with the year 1421. Yet not deserving the contemptuous phrase set upon him by Bishop Nicolson, who does not appear to have seen the book.* In the transactions of Henry the fourth's reign, it contains very little of the Prince of Wales, either publick or private; from whence one might suspect the author not to have been a contemporary, if the proofs of it collected by Hearne and inserted in the edition of his Chronicle, had not been strong.† The Welsh war itself is only noticed by him in the short passages following, viz.

The King is more than once related to have marched thither, and not to have met with success. Of the battle of Shrewsbury‡ it is only said, that the King committed part of the army to the

* Edit. Hearne Pref. 92. † Ib. 29, 89, 90, 91.

‡ Ib. p. 242.

Prince of Wales that day; but not a word of his bravery or conduct, or youth. Owen Glendower's son is said to have been taken prisoner in the battle of Huske,* 15th March, 1405, *between the Welsh and the English of the Prince's household*, where there were about 1500 killed and made prisoners; as if Henry himself had had nothing to do there. Yet it is probably the same battle as makes the subject of the Prince's letter hereafter quoted, of 11th March. The taking of Aberystwith† in 1407, is related in the words used by Walsingham, which I shall state in another page, probably copied from this author.

The story of the Prince's visit to his father in the year before his death is well told and short, and I shall have occasion to recur to it in the last section of this Essay. He relates the King's death in a natural and ordinary way,

* Ib. p. 251.

† Ib. 261.

and without any calling for his son, or other circumstances of fancy. But after that comes the coronation of Henry the fifth, with its attendant the terrible and ominous snow-storm, and the *new man* regenerated—thus—“ Qui vero mox ut initiatus est regni infulis, repenté mutatus est *in virum alterum*; honestati modestiæ et gravitati studens, nullum virtutis genus pertransiens quod non cuperet in se transferri. Cujus mores et gestûs omni conditioni servire videbantur ad apprehendendas virtutes; sicque felices reputabantur quibus imitari dabatur vestigia regis.”*

This passage is copied and enlarged by Walsingham, upon which I too shall have to enlarge in treating of the latter.

Hardyng's Chronicle of England was the work of one who was a soldier as well as poet, and who served under our

* Ib. page 273.

Henry in the war of France. In the argument of his 203d chapter, he mentions his own appointment to be constable of Warkworth Castle upon the Earl of Northumberland's attainder; and in that of chap. 212, he relates his going to the siege of Harflete with the new King. It is composed in English rhyme, of which I shall have occasion to quote only two stanzas; for there are no more that affect my inquiry.

One, which I shall consider in another place, relates to the young Prince's conduct to the Duke of Burgundy, and his being supplanted in his father's favour by his next brother. The other is the following, taken from his 211th chapter; the argument of which contains this passage "*And in the hour that he was crowned and anointed, he was changed from all vices unto virtuous life.*"—This is the stanza, in modern spelling—

" The hour he was crowned and anoint
He changed was of all his old condition.

Full virtuous he was from point to point ;
Grounded all new in good opinion,
Forpassingly without comparison.
Then set upon all right and conscience,
A new man made by all good regimence."

Walsingham wrote in the reigns of Henry the fifth and sixth. His works having deservedly gained reputation, I shall be more particular in selecting from them, than from Otterburn or Hardyng. He brings the history of England down to his own time ; and there is no difference between his Ypodigma Neustriæ and the Historia Brevis, in what relates to my subject. In what follows I have extracted from the latter all those passages in which he names Henry the fifth ; whose character, as Prince of Wales, he describes as if he derived his information from Elmham.

In his history of Henry the fourth's reign he mentions the young Prince only four times, which are on the following

occasions. First when created Prince of Wales,* and only 12 years old. But he says nothing of his age or character. Secondly in the account of the battle of Shrewsbury in 1403, where Percy was defeated and killed. Here † the Prince of Wales is related to have made his first essay in arms, and to have been wounded in the face by an arrow. This passage deserves to be particularly noted, because the event is related as briefly as in this page, and shews that the historian had no particular inclination to praise him. For the occasion would have allowed him to do so with truth, and agreeably to every reader's feelings. The prince was then only in his 16th year. Though Sandford's account ‡ would make him almost a year younger, yet the date given to his birth by Williams in the history of Monmouthshire, which

* Edit. 1574, p. 401. † P. 411.

‡ Geneal Hist. 277.

makes it of 9th Aug. 1387,* was the result of much inquiry, and seems correct. His father would hardly have placed him in battle, and in such a battle in his 15th year. The black Prince himself so celebrated for his youthful prowess was in his 17th at the field of Cressy,† when he first appeared in arms.

The third instance is of the year 1407, in the 20th of the Prince's age, when he had a command in Wales, as the King's lieutenant there against Glendower. All that is related is in these words.‡ “ In this summer the Lord Henry Prince of Wales besieged and took the castle of Aberystwith; but soon afterwards Owen Glendower contrived by fraud to retake it, and strengthened the place with a new garrison.”

The fourth and longest passage is of

* The battle was on 21st July, 1403.

† So Sandford; *eighteenth* Walsingham.

‡ Wals. 419.

the year 1410, upon the execution of a poor Lollard for Heresy, who was burnt in Smithfield.* The Prince is related to have been present, and to have taken pains with the man before he was finally shut up† for the fire, in order to convince him of his error and procure his recantation, but in vain. Afterwards during the progress of the flames, he was moved by the sufferer's cries to order the fire to be taken away, and to address the half-dead patient very earnestly to abjure his errors, and ask pardon; which the Prince promised to obtain, with a provision for life if he would récant. This being obstinately rejected, the Prince ordered him to be shut up again in the fire, and he was consumed.

This was in the last year but one of

* P. 421.

† I do not remember to have seen, except in this example, a description of the method of executing this cruel punishment, as it was here practised. The sufferer was shut up in a cask.

Henry the fourth. We may fairly draw from it two inferences of considerable effect upon the Prince's character. One, that at this period he was sincere and zealous upon those points of religion which were then brought into publick discussion; the other, that he was not without authority or influence at court.

All that Walsingham relates which can be construed into an unfavourable opinion of his personal character, is in the following passage, of the beginning of his reign. " On which day (*april 9th, his coronation,*) was a heavy fall of snow, so severe as to astonish every body; some men's minds connecting the storm with the new king's reign, as if it stamped a mark of coldness and severity upon his life and government. But others judged more mildly of the king, and interpreted this unseasonable weather to be a happy omen; as if he would cause the snow and frost of vices to fall away in his reign, and the serene

fruit of virtues to spring up. That it might be truly said by his subjects, "Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone."* Who indeed as soon as he was invested with the ensigns of royalty† was suddenly changed into a *new man*; behaving with propriety, modesty, and gravity, and shewing a desire to practise every kind of virtue. Whose manners and conduct were exemplary to all ranks both of Clergy and Laity."

Taking the obvious bearing of this description, we might from hence impute to the King a character hitherto quite contrary to *propriety, modesty, gravity, and every virtue*. Upon what evidence did these historians write this? Elmham had not said so, and had palliated what he wrote to his disadvantage. And they themselves had related nothing before to justify the charge. Yet the circumstances must have been notorious if true,

* From Solomon's song, chap. ii. 11.

† This is the passage taken from Otterburn. See p. 23.

and ought to have been noticed by a faithful relator of events. It is plain that Walsingham in this place, in copying from Otterburn, has only studied to amplify the words without inquiring into the facts; and his censure is too extensive and severe to be intitled to respect. We have seen nothing yet to rely upon, but the general words of Elmham, and must learn from other sources what this *change of behaviour* was, since these authors do not furnish the necessary information, or shew what it was before the change. Walsingham makes no reference to this part of the King's life, when in summing up his character at the end of his reign, he bestows the highest praises upon him.

These are the only historians I know, who may be called contemporaries of these reigns; and from them all subsequent writers may be supposed to have gained their information. I shall shew that they were ignorant of some of the

most material transactions of the life of Henry before his accession to the throne, and therefore were incompetent judges of his character : For I see no reason to blame them for wilful concealment. They are well enough disposed to applaud him in what they relate of his reign, and to excuse what they refer to of his early life.

Elmham's book seems to have been the foundation on which Walsingham rested, as well as T. Livius ; and these gave out the word, which was implicitly taken by all that came after. Therefore Elmham must be diligently examined ; for Otterburn and Hardyng are not distinguished enough to merit a separate consideration.

In the first transaction related by him of the Prince of Wales, his inattention to dates and times would lead the reader to imagine, as probably the writer himself thought, that Henry was advancing to manhood at the time of King Richard's expedition to

Ireland. His words are* “Virentibus adhuc annis teneris *floridæ juventutis* :” and “Cum etiam Rex idem Ricardus contra rebelles Ybernix in ipsas partes manu pugnatorum fortissimâ transfretaret, præfatum Henricum secum in suâ comitivâ, ipsum prout decuit tractando deduxit; ei plerunque signa dilectionis internæ prætendens: Jam primò didicit nondum pubertate insignitâ juvenis, inundationes fluminum et marinos tentare tumultus.” Which T. Livius improves thus,—“in expeditione cum Rege profectus est ut rem militarem et disceret et primum exerceret.” As if he had accompanied the King of his own accord, to be instructed in the art of war.

But it appears that he was then† only in the twelfth year of his age: And the King’s motive for taking him to Ireland, was, that he might thus retain a pledge for his father’s good behaviour. For the Duke

* Cap. ii.

† In May, 1399.

was then meditating in exile how to make good his return to England. Our Prince was a boy of fine parts and forward for his years, and a favourite with the King; who took the first opportunity that occurred of doing him honour even then, by knighting him under the royal standard upon first taking the field in Ireland: On which occasion he made several other knights, for the greater splendour of the ceremony.* The Prince ever retained a grateful sense of Richard's kindness to him; which serves to explain a transaction very particularly related by the contemporary and earliest writers of his reign. One of his first acts after being crowned, was to pay due funeral honours to the remains of that

* This was in June following. I cite from the curious French Manuscript No. 1319, of the Harleian collection; a part of which is translated, and published in Harris's *Hibernica*, as the work of Sir G. Carew Lord Totnes. That extract makes part of a collection in Cott. MSS. *Titus B. 11. p. 175.* which probably had belonged to the Carew family.

King, who had been buried without them ; and to shew as much respect to his memory, as his peculiar situation and the duty to his own father would permit. This remarkable event of Henry's life, the being knighted so young and in the field, is not noticed by the contemporary chroniclers, and was perhaps unknown to them. Yet it was a high distinction to one not of royal birth ; for which I must refer to M. de la Curne's *Memoirs of ancient Chivalry*.*

The next mark of inattention to his subject which I charge upon the author, is his manner of writing of the battle of Shrewsbury, although he ascribes the success of the day to our young hero. This, in my opinion, proves that he did not know his age. He could not have omitted to mention, as an addition to his praise, that he was then not sixteen years old, if he had known the fact :

* See particularly the last note to the first part.

And not to know it, is blamable ignorance in a writer of his life. He writes too that the Prince had a command of part of the army sent against Scotland in the preceding year, when he was still younger; yet without noticing his age. The King commanded that army in person, and did nothing worthy of note; but in the parliament which met in October following, the Speaker's address* compliments the King for what he did in Scotland. If the Prince of Wales had any command given him then, it must have been only nominal. But the same address thanks the Prince together with the King, for his prowess then *lately* displayed in his campaigns against the Welsh, where, according to Dr. Henry,† he commanded a division of the army.

We learn from instruments in Rymer's *Fœdera*, that in the year of the battle of Shrewsbury, young as he then was, the

* 3. Parl. Ro. 486.

† 9. Henry 8vo. p. 15, cites Otterburn.

King placed such confidence in him, as to make him his Lieutenant in Wales, for the prosecution of the war there against Glendower.* It may be presumed that he sent wise and able assistants to accompany him. But the events shew that he wanted them not. In executing this commission, he appears to have been active and diligent, and to have given proof of great abilities attended with success, of which there are records remaining.† The reader of this part of his life in Elmham, will have only a faint and very imperfect idea of his merit, and will be led by the style to suppose that he was in the full vigour of manhood at this time. Eager as he describes

* 8. Rym. Fœd. 305.

† Int. al. 8. Rym. 419. There is an article of the proceedings in parliament of October, 1404, which shews his attention to *Ways and Means*. He applies to parliament for a speedy assignment of money for his troops which had been promised, and of which he had received only one half. 3. Parl. Ro. p. 549.

him *in the pursuit of Venus as of Mars*, the letter I am about to produce will prove, that he had likewise the endowments *utriusque Minervæ*, in this period of his youth. In the second year of his command in the Welsh war, he had the good fortune to gain a great victory against superior numbers; and the modest and interesting letter which he wrote to the King his father with the news, is characteristick of him who afterwards fought at Agincourt. It is extraordinary that it should fall to me at this day to be the publisher of such a letter. I say *publisher*, because being unnoticed by our historians, the publication of it in Rymer's *Fœdera*, in the *original French*,* (some readers may stare at this) has kept it for the gratification of antiquarians only. I give the letter here translated, without farther preamble.

* 8. Rym. F. 390, from MSS. Cott. Cleop. F. 3. fo. 59. In A. D. 1404-5. 6th Hen. 4.

“ Most dread Sovereign Lord and Father,

“ In the most humble manner that I may in my heart devise, I recommend myself to your royal majesty, humbly praying your gracious blessing. Most dread Sovereign Lord and Father, I sincerely beseech God graciously to shew his providence towards you in all places; praise be to him in all his works! For on Wednesday the 11th of this instant month of March, your rebels of the parts of Glamorgan, Morgannock, Usk, Netherwent, and Overwent, drew together to the number of 8000 men by their own account; and went in the morning of the same day, and burnt part of your town of Grosmont within your Lordship of Monmouth and Jennoia.

* only my well beloved cousin the Lord

* There is something defective here. The French words of the manuscript are, as in the print, *tantost hors*, which I can make nothing of.

Talbot, and the little troop of my household; and there joined them your brave and faithful knights William Newport and John Greindre,* who made but a very small power altogether. But true it is that *the victory is not in the multitude of people*, (and thus was it well seen there) *but in the might of the Lord*.

“ And there by the aid of the blessed Trinity your men wan the field, and overcame all the said rebels; of whom they slew in the field, by fair reckoning upon our return from the pursuit, some say eight hundred, and some 1000, being questioned upon pain of death. Nevertheless, be it one or the other in this account, I will not dispute.

“ And to give you full information of the whole affair, I send you a person worthy of credit therein, one of my faithful servants the bearer hereof, who

* His services in this war were thought worthy to be mentioned with others, in the Commons address to the King. 3. Parl. Ro. p. 577.

was in the battle and very satisfactorily performed his duty, as he has ever done.

“Now such amends hath God ordained you for the burning of four houses in your town aforesaid. And no prisoners were taken except one who was a great chieftain among them, whom I would have sent to you, but that he is not yet able to bear the journey.

“And with respect to the course I propose to hold hereupon, please your highness to give entire credence to the bearer hereof, in what he will himself inform your highness on my part. And pray God ever keep you in joy and honour, and grant that I may shortly have to comfort you with more good news.

“Written at Hereford, the said Wednesday at night,

“Your most humble and obedient Son,
“HENRY.”

At the date of this letter the Prince was not eighteen years old. Yet it is

evident that the conduct of the war, and of the government of the country then in rebellion, was left entirely to him. His expressions shew that he felt the importance of his situation, and his proceedings are such as a man of experience would have directed. We see no vanity or exultation, though the occasion would have rendered it excusable in a high spirited youth of his years and quality.

The day named in the above letter for the engagement, (11th March) is the same as Carte mentions for a victory gained by the Prince over *Griffith, eldest son of Owen Glendower*. If the *chieftain* described by the Prince had been that person, his quality is not likely to have been omitted in the account of him; and we may therefore suppose the author quoted by Carte* to have been

* Ellis's Account of Owen Glendower.

mistaken, either as to the person or the time.

The same book from which Rymer copied the above letter,* contains another, written by the Prince in June of the preceding year, when he was at Worcester in his progress toward Wales to take the command of the army; in which, with a master's hand he gives orders for the disposition of troops and other circumstances, in the full exercise of authority; and that before he was seventeen. This being an official letter may possibly not have proceeded immediately from himself, and on that account I do not think it worth while to insert it.

Upon the meeting of parliament in March following, the Commons addressed the King to let the Prince remain constantly in Wales, while the war continued there:† and at the same time prayed his majesty “to direct his honour-

* Fo. 47. † 3. Parl. Ro. 569, 3 April, 1406.

able letter under the privy seal, to thank the Prince for his good and continual labour and diligence which he had continually sustained in his honourable person, for the subduing of the country, and the chastisement and punishment of the rebels, and the resistance of their evil and malicious purposes."

It is plain that T. Livius speaks with truth in observing that men were but imperfectly informed of the war in Wales.* For we have before us two contemporary writers of the life of him who had the conduct of it, the hero of their story; a young prince of elevated genius and great abilities, which were first called into action and distinguished in this war; a war that continued for many years under his government, who yet barely bestow a few lines upon the subject. May we not suspect that writers ignorant of such material parts of his life, might know as little of the other transactions, from whence

* See p. 16, before.

they have drawn one part of his character? And we may the more readily pardon the general chroniclers of those times for the same kind of inattention.

The Welsh rebellion began in the first year of the king's reign, and was not suppressed till the tenth. Many instruments of this period in Rymer's *Fœdera* shew that from the year 1403, when the Prince became the King's Lieutenant of Wales, until the rebel chief Glendower was subdued and fled, the King committed to his son his authority and confidence for the discharge of his trust. And the records of parliament shew that it was with the wishes and approbation of that assembly. It was a high trust and arduous employment. For the King was beset with difficulties as soon as he was seated on the throne, and his whole reign was a course of constant toil and exertion. Owen Glendower assumed the title of *Prince of Wales*, and at one time held in his hands

a power equal to that of its ancient Princes. In this character he made a treaty offensive and defensive* with France, the chief object of which was to invade England through Wales. Accordingly, at different times there were bodies of French troops sent to his assistance. This therefore was an important part of the King's administration; who designed and was proceeding more than once to conduct the war there in person,† but was prevented by other troubles.

The Prince of Wales seems to have continued for some years in that country, intent upon his commission, according to the desire of the House of Commons above-mentioned; during which time his rebel rival kept him in active employment, and afforded him

* 8. Rym. 356, 365, 7, 406, 7, 412. He dates his acts and instruments very royally, *In the fourth, &c. year of his Principality.*

† Instruments of the years 1405 and 1406 in 8. Rym. 407, 412, 419, shew that he then made preparations for it.

the means of accomplishing himself in that fatal art, which afterwards proved so destructive to his subjects and his enemies. But of all this we should know very little without looking for the proofs in Rymer's *Fœdera* and the records of parliament.

In this manner the Welsh rebellion was in a great measure subdued; and Glendower himself, after the defeat and death of his ally Northumberland, was no longer formidable. This happened in the spring of the year 1408.* The Prince of Wales's name does not occur afterwards in the publick instruments relating to this country; and probably he left his command there in consequence of its more settled state. It had now been about five years subject to his government.

Another cause may have helped to call him away, and perhaps to assist his

* Walsingham in that year.

father in the negotiations with France. The misfortunes and factions of that country tempted the king to retaliate upon it for the aid furnished from thence to his enemies here; and he now prepared to take advantage of their divisions, as they had done against him. About this time Prince Henry was made Warden of the Cinque Ports, and soon after Captain of Calais, upon the death of the Earl of Somerset.* This was a greater appointment and more important trust than that of Lieutenant of Wales; and the then uncertain state of peace or war with France doubled its importance.

I have not been able to find evidence of his being at any time upon ill terms with his father on account of a vicious and dissipated course of life, a circumstance related in all the modern histories. All through the Welsh transactions the contrary appears; and the above

* 8. Rym. 616, 629, in March, 1410.

appointments prove that at this period the King continued to employ his son in his most arduous business. The Captainship of Calais might be called the best thing in the King's gift, if emolument and power were in view. It was this station that enabled the Earl of Warwick in the next generation, to turn the fate of the kingdom and to make and unmake Kings.

Among the transactions of the year 1411 there is an appointment of the Earl of Arundel as ambassador to treat with the Duke of Burgundy, for a marriage of one of his daughters with the Prince of Wales, to which the Prince is a party. It is not probable that either side was sincere in this proposal, from whichever it came. The real business that arose from this intercourse seems to have been a supply of troops under the Earl's command, who went to the Duke's assistance, and enabled him to

defeat his enemy the Duke of Orleans.* It would not have been mentioned here but on account of the persons who held the chief command in the expedition, who had been of the Prince's army in Wales; as the Earl of Arundel, Sir John Oldcastle, and Hugh Mortimer his chamberlain: from whence I infer that the measure had his hearty concurrence. But Elmham and T. Livius relate that application was made directly to the Prince of Wales by the Duke of Burgundy for this aid, (an extraordinary course of proceeding) and that the King appointed his son to be President of his Council, because he was much pleased with him for sending it. There is no authority now to be found for either story. The Prince was at the head of the council long before.

Walsingham mentions the expedition to France, as a transaction in the usual course. The instrument of Lord Arun-

* Velly Hist. de France and Walsing. in this year.

del's commission is dated the first of September 1411,* by which he and others are empowered to treat of the marriage. The Prince about the same time went to his government of Calais, perhaps to superintend the expedition then preparing,† and select the troops for that service. He may have had correspondence there with the Duke of Burgundy, and that may have given rise to the passage in Elmham. In this year I find a confidential messenger was sent to him by the Pope, but for what purpose does not appear. It was not to be committed to writing.‡

In the following year the King embarked in a new scheme of politicks for France, which led him to quit his connection with the Duke of Burgundy, and to support that Duke's enemies of the Orleans party. For this end a treaty

* 8 Rym. F. 698, 9.

† Ib. 705.

‡ Ib. 726.

was concluded* between him and the Orleans chiefs, in whose support the Duke of Clarence was sent to France with a considerable army. One of the instruments of this treaty contains an engagement on the part of the Prince of Wales and his brothers, to maintain its articles against the Duke of Burgundy and all his family.† In the month of March of the next year Henry the Fourth died.

There are some other instruments in Rymer concerning the Prince, which prove the unceasing good correspondence between him and his father, for which purpose I select them, as follows:

Vol. 8. 401. June 1405, a grant to him for life of the castle and lordship of Framlingham, late belonging to the attainted Earl Marshall.

Ib. 591. July 1409, a grant of Cranburn and two other manors, &c. to hold

* 8 Rym. F. 738.

† Ib. 743.

in ward during the minority of Edmund Earl of March.

Ib. 608. Nov. 1409, a grant of 500 marks a year to him for maintenance of the said Earl and his brother. This was a trust of the highest confidence; for the young Earl, as heir in blood to the deposed King, was the constant object of Henry's fears.

Ib. 628. March 1410, a grant of a house for his residence in London.

Ib. 639. June following another grant of 500 marks as before.

Ib. 705. October 1411, a release of duties on wine for the supply of his household.

SECTION II.

Of the Prince's conduct in State Affairs.

I HAVE reserved for a separate chapter the evidences of the Prince's conduct in

state affairs, not only because the subject is distinct in itself, but because the proof is altogether drawn from a single source, the proceedings in the House of Lords, as preserved in the parliament rolls.

The reader has perhaps seen what he did not expect, of our hero's regular military employment from his earliest youth, and of his diligence as well as abilities in that character. I am about to detail matters less known, which prove that he attended as diligently to business of state, and was qualifying himself for a statesman, by engaging in the transactions of parliament at an early period of life, and sooner than is commonly thought prudent for young men to be so employed.

It is related that he was placed for education at Queen's College Oxford, under the care of his uncle Beaufort, who was afterwards Cardinal.* When, is

* Rous Hist. Regum: Angl.

not told. It must have been in his boyish days, and he could not have staid there long; yet probably long enough for one of his fine parts to acquire the best of such learning as was then taught. But exercise and experience were his chief teachers. The character which Cicero in his Orator makes L. Crassus take to himself, may be given to our Prince. "Qui ante ad agendum quam ad cognoscendum venimus, quos ——— res ipsa ante confecit quam possemus aliquid de rebus tantis suspicari."

The first proceeding of his in Parliament which I find recorded is of December 1406, and makes its appearance upon a great and remarkable day; when the settlement of the crown was fixed in the King and his issue; and signed and sealed by all the Lords, and by the Speaker for the Commons.* Next follows a petition by *the Prince of Wales and the Lords*

* 3 Parl. Ro. 583. Dec. 22^d

spiritual and temporal against the Lollards and their abettors, speakers and inventors of news and falsehood and prophecies, against the Catholick faith *and the possessions of holy church and the Prelates*; which is immediately agreed to, for the security of the publick peace and holy church. When it is considered that the King had been suspected formerly by the clergy, of lending a favourable ear to those Lollards, or to their designs against the temporalities of the prelates, this act of the Prince of Wales deserves particular remark. The King himself may be thought to have suggested it to his son, for a proof which he and his family were willing to give of their attachment to the ecclesiastical constitution, and to relieve the clergy from their fears of change.

The following article shews that the Prince in this year assisted in transacting the chief business of state and parlia-

ment, as one of the great Council;* wherein certain ordinances are established for regulating the proceedings of this council. The 13th requires all the members to be present, except where quick dispatch is necessary. In which case, those who are absent shall be consulted. Except *that if the Prince* or other Lord should be upon service out of the realm, or in Wales,† the rest shall not be obliged to wait for their answer.

The following article represents the Prince upon a great occasion, in an interesting address to the King in full Parliament. We cannot judge as we ought of its importance, for want of knowing the particular circumstances. For it seems to relate to divisions at court and in parliament, which cannot now be thoroughly explained. On the 2d Dec.

* 3 Parl. Ro. Pp. 585, 587.

† The printed roll has the word *Guerre* here for *Gales*, but I find upon examination of the record that the mistake is in the original.

1407* being the last day of Parliament, after great heat and debate, "the Speaker, in the name of the Commons, prayed the King to be graciously pleased to reward the Prince for his great labour diligence and troubles, many and frequent, in resisting the great rebellion of the Welsh. Whereof his Majesty most especially returned thanks to the Commons, for their hearty good will in this behalf. And thereupon the said Lord the Prince, most humbly kneeling, declared to our said Lord the King and to all the estates of parliament, in respect of the Duke of York, how that he had understood that divers obloquies and detractions had been put forth by certain evil disposed persons, to the slander and derogation of the honourable estate and name of the said Duke. Wherein the Lord the Prince made declaration for the same Duke, that if it had not been for his

* 3 Par. Rol. p. 611, *translated*.

skill and good advice, himself the said Prince and those who were with him, would have been in very great perils and desolation. And he farther added in behalf of the said Duke, that if he had been one of the poorest gentlemen of the realm, wishing to earn a good name and honour by service, the said Duke did so in his own person labour and use his endeavours to give comfort and courage to all others who were of the said company: And that in all his actions, he is a true and valiant knight.

And the said Speaker in the name of the Commons farther prayed, That all those who were with the said Lord the Prince in Wales, and continued and staid with him until his departure thence, might be rewarded and promoted according to their good desert. And that the rest who fled and went off from the said Prince's company, without asking or obtaining leave in that behalf, might be

punished and chastised for example to others in time to come."

The circumstances abovementioned respecting the Duke of York may be relieved from a part of their obscurity, by recurring to former transactions in which he was concerned. He had lately served in the campaign in Wales in the Prince's company, who esteemed him for his military qualities; but had incurred the King's displeasure two years before, upon some attempts then forming in favour of the young Earl of March; had been arrested and imprisoned on this account, but after some months discharged,* and was received again into favour.† The only merit of his character was in military service, which the Prince's address had been able to employ for the Duke's own benefit as well as the King's. For he had been, when Earl of Rutland, a

* 8 Rym. F. 387, 8.

† Ib. 457. He is re-appointed Constable of the Tower.

courtier to Richard the Second and his favourite companion, and was suspected of having betrayed him. He engaged in the first plot to set up the Earl of March against Henry the Fourth, but saved himself by revealing it to the King; and for this and from regard to his father Edmund Duke of York, obtained a pardon. Such a man could never be clear of suspicions in the King's mind, ever sore on the subject of Mortimer, when any danger was apprehended from that quarter. Whether this were the case on the present occasion or not, it furnished the Prince of Wales, now in the 21st year of his age, with an opportunity of shewing friendship for his kinsman and fellow-soldier, with the warmth of youthful affection, though perhaps not agreeably to his father's wishes. He continued the same kindness to him after his accession to the throne; and in the second year of his reign made a declaration in parliament in

his favour, in order to reverse the attainder passed upon him in the beginning of his father's reign.* Thus did he change enemies into friends ; and in this instance converted a treacherous courtier into an able warrior and useful servant of his country. For this Duke, who had once deserved to die upon a scaffold, was enabled by the Prince to enjoy his friendship, to live many years in honour, and lose his life nobly upon the field of Agincourt.

In the next parliament, which met in January 1409-10, there are likewise particular instances on record of the Prince's participation in the proceedings. One is a petition of the Commons, which recites that a statute of that year (Stat. ii. Hen. 4. ch. 9.) a very material one in the administration of justice, to prevent malicious prosecutions and secret indictments, was made by the King's grace

* 4 Parl. Ro. 17.

* par la bone mediation de lour redouté Seigneur le Prince.”*

The others contain entries of the respites of two ordinances “by the Lord the Prince and the Council.”† This article has given occasion to such an ill-founded censure of the Prince by high authority, and to so great a mistake in parliamentary history, as to require an explanation at some length, upon which I must therefore enter. But I shall first mention the remaining passages of the Parliament Rolls intended for this place.

On the 2d May 1410,† his name appears as chief of the great council, and as such he addresses the house upon the means of discharging the necessary public expenses. He states on their part, that if there should not be found sufficient for the purpose, they beg to decline the office assigned to them, as soon as the Parliament shall end.

* 3 Parl. Ro. p. 627. † Ib. pp. 626, 643.

† Ib. p. 632.

On the last day of this parliament* the Speaker, in the name of the Commons, prays the King to favour them with the names of the Lords of the Council, and that they may be sworn again. "Whereupon the Lord the Prince prayed the King, as well on his own behalf as for the rest of the counsellors, &c." that two new Lords may be appointed in the room of two who were absent in the north. Afterwards the Speaker repeats the recommendation of the Commons of the Prince's distinguished merits, and intreats the King's gracious favour towards him and the Princes his brothers; which the King accepts in good part.

In the next Parliament, on the last day of November, 1411,† the Speaker having prayed the King to thank the Prince and Lords of the Council in the last Parliament "for their great labour and diligence, which the Commons believed to

* 3 Parl. Ro. p. 634. † Ib. p. 649.

be a faithful discharge of their promise then made. Thereupon the Lord Prince, and the other Lords aforesaid kneeling, our said Lord the Prince declared in their names, how that they had used their labour pains and diligence, according to their promise, and the best of their skill and knowledge, in the office given to them in parliament. Which the King duly accepted, and did most graciously give them thanks. And he added, that he well knew that if they had possessed better means than they had, according to what had been spoken by the Prince,* at the time of his appointing them of his Council in the said parliament, they would have endeavoured to do more good than was done in divers places, for the defence honour benefit and profit of himself and all his realm. And our Lord the King said farther, that he was well content with their good and

* This alludes to the proceedings of May 2, 1410, in p. 63.

faithful diligence counsel and service, whilst they were of his Council as afore-said."

An address is made by the Speaker on the last day of this parliament,* in favour of the Prince and his brothers, and of the Queen likewise; after a petition made by Lords and Commons, as if to appease the King for some displeasure he had conceived against certain great men.

The words of the original passage above mentioned in page 63, are written on the roll in the margin of the ordinance thus, "*Respectuatur per dominum principem et consilium.*" These words are taken up by Sir Edward Coke† in commenting upon this ordinance, who makes them the ground of accusing *the Prince of a strange presumption*. Although, if there were any thing wrong in the proceeding, the blame must fall upon the Council as well as the Prince. The Chief

* 3 Parl. Ro. p. 658. A.D. 1411, 19th December.

† 3 Coke Inst. 225.

Justice in this place takes praise to himself for being the first to print for a statute, *that had lived long in obscurity*, one of the two acts alluded to, which inflicted punishment upon certain great officers who should receive fee or present for doing their duty. His words are, "the cause thereof (of its not being printed) was for that in the margent of the parliament roll of this act it is written, *Respectuatur per dominum principem et concilium*. A strange presumption, without warrant of the King his father and of the parliament, to cause such a respectuatur to be made to an act of parliament. The like *he* did to another act in the same parliament, N°. 63, concerning attornies, the like whereof was never done in any former or latter parliaments. This was that Prince Henry who keeping ill company, and led by ill counsel, ——— &c. &c. ———." And he cites his authors, for the story of the insulting Chief Justice Gascoigne, which

I shall reserve for another place : Confining myself here to what relates to the entries in the Parliament roll.

Whether those in question were presumptuous and illegal or not, and whether the instrument itself were a statute or not, is of no consequence to my present point. I produce them to shew that the Prince attended, and with effect, to the business of parliament in which he discharged a high and important office. If Sir E. Coke had seen as much of the proceedings in parliament of those times, as we of this day have been furnished with by the printing of the rolls, he would probably have entertained a different opinion upon this and some other points of parliamentary law, from those which now appear in his writings. In this instance it will be easy to shew that the usage and law of parliament in Henry the Fourth's time, authorised the practice he complains of.

The acts and proceedings of the two

houses out of which the statutes were framed, were not then drawn into the form of statutes till the close of the session; and the care and superintendence of this belonged to the King's Great Council assisted by the Judges. I need only refer again to that entry of May 2, before quoted in p. 63, to shew the authority of the Council in such matters. It begins thus. "The Commons came before the King and Lords in Parliament, and there prayed to be informed of the names of the Lords who shall be of his continual Council, *to execute the good appointments and ordinances made in this present parliament.*"

The Council, therefore (not the *Prince*) acted agreeably to the power vested in them, in preventing this ordinance from obtaining its final establishment as a statute, if they found cause for so doing. That the parliament of this time did put such construction upon their own proceedings, is evident from what passed in

the next parliament, on the subject of that other ordinance of this year which the Prince and Council had respited in the same manner. I will only refer to the passages in the printed rolls, for those readers whose studies may lead them to consider the point more minutely ; being sensible that I have already said more than was necessary here.* The passage taken from the roll of the 13th year of Henry the Fourth, before given in part in p. 65, shews the high sense conceived of the merits of this Council, both by the King and the Commons, for the faithful discharge of their duty ; and leaves no room for supposing that they acted wrong upon this occasion.

The effect of this act of parliament which Sir E. Coke printed for the first

* See the roll of 13 Hen. IV. p. 666, n. 49, compared with n. 63, of p. 642, in 11 Hen. IV. and chap. 10, of Lord Chief Justice Hale's tract on the Lord's Jurisdiction. Also Elsynge's *Expeditionis Billarum Antiquitas*, pp. 60, 1, 5, 6.

time, was directly brought into question upon the trial of the Earl of Macclesfield.* The managers of his impeachment relied upon it as a statute, and the Earl contended that it had not the authority of one.

Bishop Nicolson in his Historical Library has been unluckily misled by the above reflection of Sir E. Coke, to make the same charge against the Prince of Wales. But by connecting it with his current theatrical character, he gives a very idle and absurd turn to the transaction; describing the above act of the Council, as *a marginal note—one of the many frolicks of the Prince.*† Under the same impression he might have added, with as much justice, that his letter to the King was written in a like frolicksome mood.

I would now ask the reader of this

* State Trials edit. 1777, pp. 735, 759.

† Engl. Hist. Lib. part 3, ch. 2.

section, if he can believe that a writer of Henry the Fifth's life, could have omitted to mention those material parts of it which are contained in the records here cited, if he had known their contents, or those passages of his life? Much less a contemporary author, and still less a writer disposed to praise him, and to extenuate what he had found to his disadvantage? I must follow this question with another. Is the historian, whom we must suppose so ill-informed, or ignorant of a main part of his subject, intitled to much regard?

I know not where to introduce so properly as in this place, a part of his character certainly deserving notice, although neglected by the historians. Princes and potentates have been in all ages addressed and flattered by poets. Their praise does not always prove that the patron is intitled to it: Yet it is in general an attendant upon distinguished merit; and in the present case may be brought to prove

more than in others, because poets are not apt to choose out for their heroes persons whose conduct has given offence. The chief poets of that day, Occleve (or Hoccleve) and Lidgate, addressed some of their works to our prince, as a patron of literature and composed them by his desire. One of these by the former is a long composition upon princely government, translated from Egidius de Regimine Principum, addressed to him while Prince of Wales, which he tells him was the work of his great love.*

Lidgate was patronized by him both before and after his accession, and wrote his *Siege of Troy* and other poems by his desire.† Walsingham likewise dedicated his *Hypodigma Neustriæ* to Henry the Fifth.‡

There is reason to believe that all the

* MSS. Harl. 4826, N^o. 6.

† See Preface to his *Life of the Virgin*, printed by Caxton, and 1 Ellis Specim. Early Engl. Poets, 281.

‡ 10 Henry. Hist. Engl. 8vo. p. 181.

sons of Henry the Fourth, through his care, had attained to higher literary accomplishments than the other young nobility of their age. The King extended the same care to his royal captive of Scotland, and thus made amends to him and his subjects for an act of great injustice in his person. Henry the Fifth was fond of books, as is proved by a curious article in Rymer,* of two petitions to the Council after his death, for the return of valuable books of history, borrowed by him of the Countess of Westmoreland and of the Priory of Christchurch Canterbury, and not returned ; though one of them had been directed to be delivered to its owner by the King's last will. Twine relates that he had prepared a scheme of new modifying the University of Oxford, and of erecting a new College there with large endowments.† We are indebted to the

* 10 Vol. p. 317. † Antiq. Acad. Oxon. Apol.

Duke of Bedford, for the first great collection of books that has been known in England, which had formed the French King's Library and was purchased by the Duke. Both Oxford and Cambridge have proofs of the Duke of Gloucester's liberality to their institutions.

SECTION III.

*Of the common stories of the Prince's
Excesses and Misconduct.*

I SHALL take separately such of the tales as have been current, of our Prince's vicious and dissipated course of life, and examine them as well as my materials will enable me.

1. *The Prince of Wales rescues a prisoner under trial, and insults the Chief Justice in Court.*

OUT of respect to my lord Chief Justice

Coke, I begin with that tale which we have lately left him prepared to introduce, of Henry's violence and rudeness in the court of King's Bench, against his predecessor Chief, whose affront he seems to feel in his own person. He continues the passage quoted in page 67 thus. "This was that Prince Henry, who keeping ill company and led by ill counsel, *about this time* assaulted (some say) and struck Gascoigne Chief Justice, sitting in the King's Bench. For that the Prince endeavouring with strong hand to rescue a prisoner, one of his unthrifty minions, indicted and arraigned at the King's Bench bar for felony, was prevented of his purpose by the persuasion and commandment of the Chief Justice. For which the Chief Justice committed the Prince to the King's Bench; whereof some of his followers instantly complained to the King his father: Who informing himself of the true state of the case, gave God infinite thanks that

he had given him such a judge as feared not to minister justice, and such a son as could suffer semblably and obey justice. And this is that Prince who abandoning his former company and counsel, and following the advice of grave wise and expert men whom he made choice of to be of his council, became a victorious and virtuous king, and prosperous in all that he took in hand at home and abroad."

For this anecdote he refers to Sir Thomas Elyot's Governor and Holinshed's Chronicle. Without our going farther than his quotation, it may be observed that the King himself is represented to have entertained a different opinion from Sir Edward Coke upon the adventure; for he upon the instant thanks God for giving him such a son. And there is neither ill company, nor ill counsel, nor unthrifty minions charged upon the young man by Sir T. Elyot, with whose whole chapter I am going to pre-

sent the reader. For I cannot trace the story higher than this book; which is a collection of moral discourses upon education intitled *The Governor*, dedicated to Henry the eighth, in whose reign the author was distinguished as a scholar and courtier.* The tale is introduced there for a different purpose from that of Sir E. Coke, and in order to give praise to all the persons named in it, as follows.

* B. 2. Chap. 6. It was first printed in 1534, according to Oldys. This extract is also given in Reed's edition of Shakespear, vol. 12. p. 224, but introduced with a mistake from Sir J. Hawkins respecting the Chief Justice's early history. Fuller in his *Worthies* v. 1. p. 505, edit. 1811, Art. *Gascoigne*, refers to Elyot as the original for the anecdote; and Oldy's in his *Brit. Lib. Art.* 43, supposes it such. Fuller adds, "from whom our modern historians have transcribed it." It is to be regretted that they have not adhered to the *Governor* but have gone to the *Comedian* whom Fuller alludes to, for its enlargement. He says "Hence our Comedian (fancy will quickly blow up a drop in history into a bubble in poetry) hath founded a long scene on the same subject." Oldys adds in a note,

2. "*A good Judge, a good Prince, a good King.*"

THE most renowned Prince, king Henry the fift, late king of Englande, duringe the lyfe of his father was noted to be fierce and of wanton courage. It happened that one of his servants whom he favoured well, was for felony by him committed arreynd at the kings bench: whereof the Prince being advertised, and incensed by light persons about him, in furious rage came hastely to the barre, where his servaunt stood as a prisoner, and commaunded him to be ungived and sette at libertie. Whereat all men were abashed, reserved the chiefe Justice, who humbly exhorted the Prince to be contented that his servant might be ordered, according to the auncient lawes of this Realme: or if he would have

that the event was commemorated by a medal which he had seen, representing the Judge on the bench, with a person beside him, and three as auditors to whom he is reading.

him saved from the rigour of the lawes, that he should obtayne, if he might, of the king his father his gracious pardon, whereby no Law or Justice should be derogate.

With which aunswere the Prince nothing appeased, but rather more inflamed, endeavoured himselfe to take away his servaunt. The Judge considering the perilous example and inconvenience that might thereby ensue, with a valyant spirite and courage commaunded the Prince uppon his alleagaunce to leave the prisoner and depart his way ; at which commaundemet the Prince beinge set all in a furye, all chaufed, and in a terrible maner, came up to the place of judgement, men thinking that he would have slain the Judge, or have done to him some damage : But the Judge sitting still without moving, declaring the majestie of the Kings place of judgement, and with an assured and bold countenance, had to the Prince these words following :

Sir remember your selfe. I keepe heere the place of the king your sovereigne lord and father, to whome ye owe double obedience: wherefore eftsoones in his name, I charge you to desist of your wilfulnesse and unlawfull enterprise, and from hencefoorth give good example to those which hereafter shall be your proper subjects. And now, for your contempte and disobedience, goe you to the prison of the Kinges bench, where unto I commit you, and remaine ye there prisoner untill the pleasure of the Kinge your father be further knowen. With which words being abashed, and also wondering at the marvailous gravitie of that worshipful Justice, the noble Prince laying his weapon aparte, doing reverence departed and went to the Kinges bench as he was commaunded. Whereat his servants dismayned, came and shewed to the King al the whole affayre, whereat he a whiles studying, after as a man all ravished with

gladnesse, holding his eyes and handes up towards heaven, abrayded with a loud voyce: O mercifull God, how much am I bound to your infinite goodness, specially for that you have given me a judge, who feareth not to minister Justice, and also a son who can suffer semblably and obey Justice."

There is no date given to this tale, either in its original state or in its subsequent changes. Yet Sir E. Coke chooses to fix it *about this time*, i. e. the time of the *strange presumption* which he censures. With respect to his *ill company* and *striking the Judge*, and the rest, they are indeed to be found in Holinshed. But whether he or another were the first relator of that gross and mean personal insult, it ought to gain no credit with those who take the account from Sir T. Elyot. I suspect that it came from the stage and play books into the history books; as I can find none of them in which this choice morsel is preserved,

more ancient than the coarse old play of Henry the Fifth, which I am about to exhibit to the reader, for this and other *good things* of the same kind.

This adventure afforded a droll pantomimical scene for vulgar entertainment in that play. The actor of the clown's part there being a great favourite of the audience, and the piece a popular one; as Malone has shewn, though Steevens had imagined the contrary.* It has the following title, "The famous Victories of Henry the Fifth, containing the honourable battle of Agin-court, as it was acted by the Kinges Majesties servants." I use the collection of *Six Old Plays on which Shakespeare founded his &c.* by Nicholls 1779. We are not told when it was first printed. *The King's Majesty* in the title page of the edition followed there, proves that to be of James the first's time. Mr. Malone's industry

* Reed's Shakesp. V. 3. p. 363, and V. 12. p. 262.

has found in the books of the Stationers' Company, an order for printing it in 1594;* which is earlier than the printing of Shakespear's Henry IV. and V. But it was a play acted and well known before 1588; for Tarlton the favourite actor mentioned above, is related to have been Clown and Chief Justice in it, and he died in that year.† Therefore though Holinshed's Chronicle was printed in 1573, the probability is in favour of the priority of the play. The internal evidence of its language and manners confirms it strongly, though the spelling and many phrases have been modernized. But such stuff as this piece consists of could not have been composed for the stage, even by the Clown himself, after Shakespear's had got abroad.

* Reed's Shakesp. v. 2. pp. 122, 226, 291.

† Ib. v. 12. p. 262 and note to the title of Henry V. There appears to have been another play of Henry V. acted in 1597, that is lost to us.

There is no *Dramatis Personæ*, and no division of acts or scenes. It thus begins, after the title before mentioned.

“ Enter the young PRINCE, NED and TOM.

HENRY *the Fifth.*

Come away Ned and Tom.

BOTH.

Here my Lord.

HENRY 5.

Come away my lads. Tell me Sirs how much gold have you got.

NED.

Faith my Lord, I have got five hundred pound.

HENRY 5.

But tell me Tom, how much has't thou got?

TOM.

Faith my Lord, some foure hundred pound.

HENRY 5.

Foure hundred pounds; bravely spoken

Lads. But tell me Sirs, thinke you not that it was a villainous part of me to rob *my father's* receyvers?

NED.

Why no my Lord, it was but a tricke of youth."

While they are in this discourse—"Enters Jockey"—and he, the reader will discover, is no less a personage than Sir John Oldcastle, the original, very remote, of Falstaff; who tells the Prince, that there is hue and cry after *his man* who robbed a poor carrier last night. The Prince speaks of the man as a base-minded rascal, to rob a poor carrier; but however he'll save his life. Then they discourse about their recent adventure of robbing *the Receivers*; from whom the Prince got a hard drubbing, who are close upon them in pursuit, and come upon the stage, after the marginal direction of *Enters two Receyvers*. The

Prince accosts them, and they tell him of their loss, begging his intercession, on account of their being now unable to pay in their receipts at the Exchequer. Then

“ *Exit Pursevant*”—of whom nothing else appears.

Here is enough to shew the ground work of the Carriers and Robbery scenes of Shakespear, by whom the two adventures of this play are mixed into one. The conversation ends with their departure for *the old tavern in Eastcheap*. Then the Watch come on, to whom

Enters the Theefe

Who inquires the way to Eastcheap, and whom Dericke, the person robbed, accosts by the name of Gadshill, and he is arrested. Then a boy enters to tell the news of a riot and affray, by *the young Prince and three or four more of his companions* in their cups, which occasioned the Mayor and Sheriff to be sent for, by whom the Prince was carried to

the Counter. So now we have got him safe in prison; out of which however he soon returns, without warrant from the scene.

The Thief on hearing that he must go to prison, begs to be sent to that *where his Master is*. The Mayor and *Sheriff* are sent for to Court, where the King commends them for what they have done. Then

“ Enter Lord Chiefe Justice, Clarke of the Office, Jayler, John Cobler, Dericke and the Theefe.”

After forming a criminal Court, and proceeding to try the thief, (which is worth noting on account of the day named in their indictment,* when both

* 20 May in the *fourteenth* year of the King, who died 20 March preceding. The Chief Justice died 17th Dec. 1412, according to Mr. Malone's note, which refers to his tombstone for this date. I have looked into the Year books, and find his name occurs there in the preceding month of November, but not afterwards.

King and Chief Justice happened to be dead) the Prince, whom we lately left lodged in the Counter, re-appears thus. —“ Enter the young Prince with Ned and Tom.

HENRY 5.

Come away my lads. Gogs wounds ye villaine, what make you here? I must goe aboute my businesse myselfe, and you must stand loytering here.

THEEFE.

Why my Lord they have bound mee, and will not let me go.

HENRY 5.

Have they bound they villain, why, how now my lord.

JUDGE.

I am glad to see your grace in good health.

HENRY 5.

Why my lord this is my man. Tis marvell you knew him not, long before this. I tell you he is a man of his hands.

THEEFE.

I, gogs wounds, that I am, try me who dare.

JUDGE.

Your grace shall finde small credite by acknowledging him to be your man.

HENRY 5.

Why my lord, what hath he done?

JUDGE.

And it please your majesty, he hath robbed a poore Carrier."

After some skirmishing conversation between the Judge and the Prince, very suitable to the rest of the piece, it proceeds,

" HENRY 5.

But will you not let him goe?

JUDGE.

I am sorry that his case is so ill.

HENRY 5.

Tush, case me no casings, shall I have my man?

JUDGE.

I cannot, nor I may not, my lord.

HENRY 5.

Nay, and I shall not, say, and then
I am answered.

JUDGE.

No.

HENRY 5.

Then I will have him.

He giveth him a box on the eare.

NED.

Gogs wounds my lord, shal I cut off
his head?

HENRY 5.

No, I charge you draw not your swords.
But get you hence, provide a noyse of
musitians. Away, be gone.

Exeunt the Theefe.

JUDGE.

Well my lord, I am content to take
it at your hands.

HENRY 5.

Nay, and you be not, you shall have
more.

JUDGE.

Why I pray you my lord, who am I?

HENRY 5.

You, who knowes not you. Why man you are Lord Chiefe Justice of England.

JUDGE.

Your grace hath said truth, therefore in striking me in this place you greatly abuse me, and not me only but also your father; whose lively person here in this place I do represent. And therefore to teach you what *prerogatives** meane, I commit you to the Fleet, until wee have spoken with your father.

HENRY 5.

Why then belike you meane to send mee to the Fleete.

* I suspect a popular allusion here (and it must have been a bold one then) to Queen Elizabeth's scolding her parliament for meddling with her prerogative, and sending some members to prison on that score, about the time when I suppose this scene in vogue, and when clowns said more than is *set down for them*. It is fully repeated in the second acting by the clown. See Hume's Hist. in 1579, 1585.

JUDGE.

I, indeed, and therefore carry him away.

Exeunt Henry V. with the Officers.

JUDGE.

Jayler carry *the prisoner to Newgate* againe until the next sises.

JAYLER.

At your commandment my lord it shall be done."

Here the author seems to have forgotten that his prisoner had set himself free before, by the Prince's authority, according to the direction of *Exeunt the Theefe*. This is followed by the entrance of Dericke and one of the watchmen, who act the box on the ear overagain, to the great delight of the audience.

And here I quit the theatre: For my subject does not permit me in Falstaff's phrase, to *play out the Play*, or to produce more than this specimen of *The famous Victories of Henry the Fifth*.

The serious part of the charge, (which

is lost in that of the blow) the violent attempt to rescue a prisoner under trial, cannot be defended; and I must submit to the judgment or mercy of that age. As for us, we only know the story now in its original state, by the merit of the Prince's submission and repentance; therefore as the King forgave him for the rashness, and thanked God for its effects, we may ratify the pardon. It is to be regretted for the honour of our ancestors, that more outrageous violations of the course of Justice than a rescue such as this by the young Prince, may be found in the transactions of his contemporaries. What will the reader think of a Judge of the King's Bench of that generation conducting a body of 500 armed men,* to maintain his quarrel and overawe a noble Lord of great power, who was accompanied

* Among whom are *Knights and Esquiers and Yomen that had ledynge of men on his partie.*

by our very Chief Justice Gascoigne, his colleague and immediate superior, at an arbitration judicially appointed? And it happened, in the words of Sir E. Coke, *about this time*; for it was in the year before that of the King's death. The case is preserved at length in the Parliament Roll (V. 3. 649, 650) and well worth reading.* The Judge though he submitted and asked pardon in plain English, had not as much merit as the young Prince; for he did so by award of judgment. The conclusion of the quarrel was also in good English, awarded likewise: viz. an excellent dinner of two fat oxen, twelve fat sheep, and two tons of *Gascoigne* wine.

* I request the reader of my tract on High Treason to consider this case, if the subject should induce him to turn to it in pp. 69, 70; for which a note of reference was intended to this passage of the Parliament Rolls, but accidentally left out of the additional notes to that Essay.

Stow in his chronicle has nothing of the Chief Justice but what he is content to take from the *Governor*, in the chapter here quoted, which he copies ; and with the same view as its author, for the example's sake and to the honour of all concerned. He introduces it in his opening of the reign of Henry the fifth.

II. *The Prince of Wales turned out of the Council.*

Now having once got this rude box on the ear upon Chronicle record, we find its consequences extended to a greater event. For it is related that the King was so displeased with his son for this cause, that he turned him out of his place in council, and appointed his brother Clarence in his room. For the truth of this, let the proceedings in parliament, as I have produced them, speak. Yet so write Hall, Holinshed, Speed &c. It matters not who was the first or who

the last to relate any thing so false. I have shewn before* that even the contemporaries Elmham and T. Livius were as much mistaken, in what they believed of the time and cause of his being first appointed to that station. Hardyng another contemporary seems to have been as ignorant as they, in the following passage of his Chronicle, which would induce a reader to suppose that the King shewed this displeasure towards Prince Henry, for having sent aid to the Duke of Burgundy. This is quite contrary to them, and is not directly asserted. The stanza runs thus in his 209th chapter.

‘ The King discharged the Prince from his counsaile
And set my lord Sir Thomas in his stede
Chiefe of Counsaile, for the King’s more awayle.
For which the Prince of wrath and wilful hede
Again him made debate and froward hede.
With whom the King took part, and held the felde
To tyme the Prince unto the King him yelde.”

The argument of this chapter is “ How

* Pa. 50.

the Prince Henry of Wales sent power to the Duke of Burgundy to help him; the two Umfrevilles, Sir John Gray, with other &c." He tells of their success in France, and coming home rewarded, and Gilbert Umfreville made Earl of Kyme in France: and how the Duke thanked *the Prince* for sending them. After which immediately follows the stanza above quoted. It is impossible to reconcile the two stories, and I attempt no more than to shew that neither is warranted by the records of parliament.

III. The Prince guilty of a Riot in the Streets, and of robbing on the Highway.

THERE are two passages in the scenes of our old comedy, which when compared with Stow's Chronicle, authorise us to believe that two of the adventures brought upon the stage to the Prince's dishonour, have had more foundation in fact than that of striking the judge.

If the chronicles borrowed this from the play, the play has perhaps taken the debt again with compound interest from the chronicles, and with greater extravagance. The scene transcribed in pp. 86, 87, makes the Prince talk of robbing *the Receivers* going to the Exchequer; And a boy there tells of a riot by the Prince and his companions, which was quieted by the coming of the Mayor and Sheriff. What if this riot should prove a true breach of the peace, the scene really in East Cheap, and the King's sons the offenders, yet Henry of Monmouth not among them? What if it should turn out to be true, that this Prince royal did really commit a robbery of Receivers on their way to London with money?

Stow in his narrative of the year 1411 has this paragraph. "Upon the even of St. John Baptist, *Thomas* and *John* the King's sons being in Eastcheap at London, at supper after midnight, a

great debate happened between their men and men of the Court, lasting an hour, till the Mayor and Sheriffs with other citizens ceased the same."

Here would be fine matter of revenge afforded to the spirit of Falstaff, against his *sober-blooded boy* Lord John of Lancaster!* But the players having once got possession of the Prince of Wales for a subject, all facts must be moulded to fit his person. The pranks of the Lords Thomas and John were thought too good for younger brothers, and to suit better with the established theatrical reputation of *young Hopeful* the heir apparent. I believe the above to be a probable account of the introduction of the riot adventure, by a pardonable though wilfull error of the Playbook. The author found the tale of a riot royal *extant in choice English*, with the name of some grave chronicler in folio to war-

* See 2d part Hen. 4. act 4. sc. 7.

rant it, and was indifferent to the names of the parties *actores fabulae*.*

For *The Receivers*, there is the following passage in Stow's beginning of the reign, in describing the new King's character. "He lived somewhat insolently, insomuch that *whilst his father lived*, being accompanied with some of *his young lords and gentlemen*, he would wait in disguised array for *his own Receivers*, and distress them of their money. And sometimes at such enterprises both he and his company were sorely beaten. And when his Receivers made to him their complaints how they were robbed

* There is a ballad of Henry the fourth's time printed among Chancer's works (edit. 1721. pa. 546.) addressed to the four young Princes, to dissuade them from spending time in *youthed folily*; from whence it may be inferred that all the brothers had the character of being well inclined to gaiety. It is noticed by Malone, as quoted in 12 Reed p. 127. The four Princes were as near together in age as might be. According to W. of Worcester (2. Hearn Lib. Nig. p. 443) their births were in 1367, 8, 9, 90.

in coming unto him, he would give them discharge of so much money as they had lost. And besides that, they should not depart from him without great rewards for their trouble and vexation; especially they should be rewarded, that best had resisted him and his company, and of whom he had received the greatest and most strokes. *And for example Sir T. Eyot writeth thus—*" &c. copying the chapter inserted at p. 79.

Here we have a natural and credible account of a youthful frolick; *boyish* would perhaps be a better word, and more agreeable to the truth: Though the words of Stow, *whilst his father lived*, are too loose to usher in such a fact. Not indeed creditable to a young Prince at any time, but certainly consistent according to the state of times and manners with great and good qualities, without leaving any stain of disgrace, either for keeping low company or adopting their profligacy. The young lords his

companions who helped him to run down a Buck, according to Elmham, would not be backward in assisting him to run down one of his Bailiffs. But see how a good story may be improved ! More especially when dressed up for the theatre, according to the fashion of the times.

IV. The Prince's Debaucheries and vicious Companions.

How is this charge made out ?

Oh—there is Falstaff, all in all.

Then you must keep to your Prince at the Playhouse, for there is no such companion out of it ; and we have no such Prince royal in the race of Plantagenet. The only companions of young Henry of Monmouth who are known, were *Chiefs in war and Statesmen in place ;* as good as Mr. Pope's *best companions* who were out of those employments.

Why surely the whole-current of history is so—

“Ay there’s the rub.” Let us go up this stream, and examine it till we arrive at its spring in Lenton Priory.

Few of the writers have gone there. Each of them has studied how to vary the phrases of his predecessor, upon a matter which he supposed established. Not one has taken Elmham’s grain of a text, and tried to beat it out for leaf-gold to adorn his page; but as a drug for historical experiments in the art of colouring; and to try how many times it might be multiplied or varied.

I should like to present the reader with a kind of polyglott page in columns, consisting of those passages of the historians which describe the beginning of Henry the fifth’s reign, to shew how little attention any one of them has paid to facts and authority, and how inconsistent they are with each other and themselves. But they are too many and long and exuberant. Dr. Henry whom

I respect the most, is almost as faulty as Hume in this article. Rapin equally so, and Carte not much better. They content themselves with citing authors whom, *if they did read*, they misrepresent, and manifestly describe the character of the young King during his father's life, from that prevailing notion which we all acquire at school.

Dr. Henry puts in the margin of his first page, as an established article for history, *His youthful Frolicks*. Having in the preceding section mentioned his frolicksome and disorderly conduct, as the cause of much vexation to his father. But I, standing here for the truth of history cannot accept so mild a phrase, if the author believes and would have us believe the books he quotes. It is vice and profligacy or nothing at all. The only youthful frolick related of him with an appearance of truth, is that by Stow beforementioned, of his robbing the receivers of his own rents for the

sake of laughing at their distress. But I find no mention of this frolick in modern times. Yet it is probably true, and merits no harder name than youthful frolick; understood, as it must be of his boyish days. In a single page of Dr. Henry we have

Suspensions of the people concerning his character—Object of the people's love and the father's jealousy in early life—Out of military employment for four or five years before his accession, and excluded from the Cabinet—Direct violations of law—for which he was twice imprisoned, once by the Chief Justice and once by the Mayor of Coventry—Licentious companions of his former riots. The reader of the foregoing pages is qualified to put a fair estimate on these accusations, and may dismiss them all except the charge I have now in hand. The author has been a little more cautious than Hume in the above description, and is therefore less liable to censure.

Hume has taken every thing on this subject that could be found without going far, and in his usual way has made an agreeable piece of writing for the reader's entertainment; but as void of foundation and free from inquiry, as the scenes of our poet. David Hume the Philosopher has shewn himself here as poetical as the Prior of Lenton. All the charges quoted from Dr. Henry are given by him, and more: For he introduces the Chief Justice who was then dead, *trembling to approach the royal presence, &c. &c.* Improves the robbery scene of the stage into a practice of *attacking passengers on the streets and highways*. Yet his love of royal blood and good manners will not permit him to relate the blow given to the judge, though he seems to believe it.

Thomas Carte *the Englishman*, the solid and inquisitive Carte has been idle here. In his opening of this reign he writes thus of Henry V. "He had shew-

ed his valour and martial genius in the battle of Shrewsbury and the war against the Welsh; and was so fond of exerting them that if serious occasions did not offer, he would exercise them in frolicks. The fire of youth and the dissolute companions that fell in his way led him into many extravagances; for one of which at Cheylesmore (a house belonging to the Duchy of Cornwall within the liberty of Coventry) he had been the last year *taken into custody* by John Hornesby the Mayor of that city.* And Sir W. Gascoigne

* I believe this is the first introduction of the story from Coventry, owing perhaps to Carte's coming from this county. I am inclined to send it to *Coventry* again, though Dr. Henry repeats it on Carte's authority. This authority is from *Append. ad Fordun. Scot. Chron. p. 1444.* in Hearne's edition, from an old chronicle of the Mayors of Coventry. But the page referred to does not yield as much as it stands for in Carte. It is said of John Hornesby as Mayor in 1412. "He arrested the Prince in priory of Coventry." *Cheylesmore* and the *Duchy of Cornwall* do not appear there, and are perhaps to be imputed to Carte's

Chief Justice of the King's Bench is *said* to have ordered him to prison upon another occasion. The representation of his behaviour in submitting humbly to that order doth him honour; and shews evidently that how wild a rake soever he was, he did not want a large fund of good sense, and could come to himself on a moment's reflection. His sallies did not hinder him from being universally beloved, the natural if not neces-

local knowledge. The next article to this, which contains the Mayor of the succeeding year, has subjoined. "In his year King Henry V. began to reign." If the event had been as remarkable as Carte supposes, it would probably have drawn something more from the Chronicler's pen, being so near to the *Prince's* becoming really a *new man* and King. What the arrest was, and what *Prince* was arrested, are not to be discovered. If it had been as good as the other *good things* told of Henry of Monmouth upon as good authority, we may be sure that it would have found its way to the theatre and play books. More especially when we consider that Shakespear came from the neighbourhood of this transaction.

sary effect of agreeable qualities ; and his court was always crouded by the nobility, whilst his father's was in a manner empty." On his accession " he became in a manner *a new man*, pious devout sober continent considerate equitable wise ; in his actions noble, in business assiduous, in all his behaviour majestic ; and bidding adieu at once to his follies, discharged his former companions from daring to appear in his presence till they had reformed their manners."

Rapin overcharges the character still more. *His court was the receptacle of libertines debauchees parasites buffoons and the like* (I quote the English translation.) *Daily excesses and extravagant pranks.—His father had always kept him at a distance from affairs.* Jealous of his victories, *he removed him from all warlike as he had done from all civil offices.* " Et alia enormia," a lawyer would exclaim who had been conversant in our latin pleadings.

Speed's history written in the reign of

James the first, was not out of fashion when Rapin wrote; from whom as an established author, Trussel copied this part of his subject. Speed therefore may be classed here as next before Rapin; but I do not find him quoted by that author in this part. His beginning of this reign has the merit of containing less than some of his predecessors, of the *youthful extravagances and bad companions*: Except in one glaring and faulty example, which is that of assaulting the Judge. He quotes Elyot's Governor, of which he only copies a part, and that incorrectly; to which he adds, that the *Prince gave the Judge a blow on the face*, as if this were a part of the original author. Yet though perhaps he had Holinshed fresh before him, he avoids some of his inconsistencies relating to our Prince. It is pleasant to observe the delicate course he takes to introduce the current tales of *youthful excesses, &c.* After describing him as *like Titus, the lovely darling and delightful*

joy of mankind, he continues "But as Titus is taxed by his story writers, in youth to have been riotous profuse wasteful and wanton—so if we will *believe what others have writ*,* Henry was wild when he was a *Prince*, &c." He cites Stow Grafton and Walsingham; but would have done better to have followed Stow only, who immediately preceded him, and who by writing after Holinshed had the means of examining and weighing his work, and shews often that he did so.

Stow rejects a great deal of what Holinshed wrote of Henry of Monmouth's youthful days; for the only example given by him of what he calls *living somewhat insolently*, besides the chapter from Sir T. Elyot, is the prank of robbing his own bailiffs. He mentions indeed the *sudden change* upon his accession; (the chief point of the chronicler's creed

* Here in the margin he cites T. Livius.

here) without having related any thing before, from which there could have been a change made.

Holinshed was his contemporary, but first in order. As I know little of this long established author but what belongs to my present subject, I can only judge of him by that. There I find great negligence and inconsistency. He gives a particular description, which I shall have occasion to recur to, of the Prince's going to Court with a great train of *noblemen and other his friends that wished him well*, to clear himself to the King of suspicions entertained by him to his prejudice. Describes the interview of the father and son, and the hearty reconciliation which it produced between them, and concludes it with these words "So by his great wisdom was the wrongful suspicion removed." A little after he adds, that it might have had a contrary effect; for some—" *privily* charged him with riot and other uncivil demeanors unseemly

for a prince. Indeed he was youthfully given, grown to audacity, and had chosen him companions agreeable to his age, with whom he spent the time in such recreations exercises and delights as he fancied. But yet (it should seem by the report of some writers) that his behaviour was not offensive, or at least tending to the damage of any body. Sith he had a care to *avoid doing of wrong, and to tender his affections within the tract of virtue.* Whereby he opened unto himself a ready passage of good liking among the prudent sort, and was beloved of such as could discern his disposition; which was in no degree so excessive as that he deserved in such vehement manner to be suspected. In whose *dispraise I find little, but to his praise very much.* Parcels whereof I will deliver by the way, as a metyard whereby the residue may be measured." He then quotes latin verses of a panegyrick made upon him in his youth by Christopher Ocland.

After this, who would expect to find the following passages* in the introduction of the new reign of Henry the fifth?

“Such great hope and good expectation was had of this man’s fortunate success to follow, that within three days after his father’s decease, divers noblemen and honourable personages did to him homage, &c.” Then, after relating the coronation on the very stormy day, on which *divers interpretations* were made,† as in Walsingham, he proceeds.

“But this King even at first appointing with himself to shew that in his person princely honours should change publick manners, he determined to put on him the shape of a *new man*. For whereas aforetime he had made himself a companion unto misruly mates of

* New 4to. edit. Vol. 3. p. 61.

† It is remarkable that this ill omen so frequently repeated, is not noticed by the first writer Elmham, though it is by Otterburn.

dissolute order and life, he now banished them all from his presence, &c. &c.— calling to mind how once he had offended his father by striking the Chief Justice —had been expelled the Privy Council—banished the Court—and his brother Clarence preferred in his stead.—” For all which he can cite no better authority than Latin verses from Ocland’s *Anglorum Prælia*, nothing to the purpose. What is this but the composition of a school-boy at his task, copying from one author and then another, to eke out his page? What he has of *honours* and *manners* appears to be taken from Hall, who takes from Polydore Vergil; with which he mixes paragraphs from his English predecessors: But the whole together is unworthy of the name of history.

Hall, who is copied by Grafton, takes the words of Fabian concerning Henry of Monmouth, together with a partial translation of Polydore Vergil. For Hall’s prefixed list of authors has not

the names of Walsingham, T. Livius and Elmham. He dwells upon the extraordinary and sudden change from vice to virtue, upon the Prince's becoming King, and the dismissal *modo et formâ* of his *loose companions*; and introduces in parenthesis the striking the Chief Justice *on the face*, and being *therefore* banished from Court and Council.

Yet he had related nothing in the course of Henry the fourth's reign, to inform us of his disposition or behaviour. At the same time he shews that what he writes deserves no regard; for he describes the unusual pressing forward of the nobility to pay him homage before the coronation, because "they conceived a good expectation both of his *virtuous beginnings*, and also of his fortunate success in all things *which should be attempted* or begun during the time of his *prosperous reign* and fortunate empire." If what he writes on the other side were

true, they must have conceived a very bad expectation of him.

Polydore probably wrote after Fabian. He came to this country to write our history at the request of Henry the seventh, in whose reign what we now have from him of former reigns was composed. In writing of our prince, he seems to pay little regard to what he may have found to his prejudice ; for he commences the account of his reign with panegyrick, as of one *of whom the best hopes had been conceived from his early youth.* He writes of his parting with his *young* companions, not for the purpose of blaming him for former misbehaviour, like his copiers ; but *because the Prince felt that the high elevation of royalty, and change of place, required a change of manners.* He therefore took grave and wise counsellors in the room of those who had been the companions of his youth and wantonness. This I take to be the just and fair meaning of his expressions.

At the same time I would not rely upon his authority, if it stood alone; and would rather quote him for what he does not, than what he does say. I derive from him a negative service of this kind to my argument here, for the above is the substance of all that he writes upon the early character of Henry the fifth.*

Fabian's opening of Henry the fifth's reign has the following passage. "This man before the death of his father applied himself unto all vice and insolency, and

* The following is from the Basle edition of P. Vergil 1557, p. 439. "—aded Henricus ab ineunte ætate spem omnibus optimæ indolis fecit.—Hic vir hic fuit qui à primo docuit honores, ut est in proverbio, debeant mutare mores : Quippe qui statim ut est rex factus, statuens alio atque habebat vitæ instituto sibi utendum, omnes suos *æquales* quibuscum pueritiam, quæ lasciviæ et insolentiæ ut plurimum est plena, egerat, ab se relegavit, illisq. regiam interdixit; ac loco illorum fortissimos gravissimos quosq. viros in familiaritatem recepit; in quibus judicaret et in capiendò consilio prudentiam summam inesse, et in dando fidem, ut eorum consilio monitis prudentiâ juvaretur."

drew unto himself rioters and wild disposed persons : But after he was admitted to the rule of the land, anon and suddenly he became a *new man*, and turned all that rage and wildness to soberness and wise sadness, and the vice into constant virtue." His conclusion of the last reign affords a good specimen of his qualification for writing it. He names among the King's children, as *fifth son*, Henry the rich Cardinal, *and two other sons by Katherine Swinford* ; which mistake he had made before, and refers to it again.

Caxton who wrote under Edward the fourth, and may have taken Walsingham or Elmham for his guide, has a chapter at the end of his reign of Henry the fifth, after relating his death and funeral, under this title. "Of the laud of King Henry the Fifth, and what he ordained for King Richard." He then proceeds, "Here is to be noted that the King Henry 5, was a noble Prince after he was King and crowned ; howbeit be-

fore in his youth he had been wild reckless and spared nothing of his lusts nor desires, but accomplished them after his liking. But as soon as he was crowned anointed and sacred, anon suddenly he was changed into a *new man*, and all his intent to live virtuously in maintaining of holy church, destroying of hereticks, keeping justice, and defending of his realm and subjects.* We may consider this as very moderate, if we reflect on what Caxton has said in describing his additions to the Polychronicon. He begs every reader's indulgent correction, "for if I coulde have founde moo stories I woulde have sette in it moo——" which was the current practice of the Chroniclers. *More stories* made the excellence of one above another.

John Rous (or Ross) who was next

* I quote in modern spelling, from a MS. in Bibl. Cott. Claud. A. 8, which seems the same in general as the edition printed by himself 1482, and another by W. de Worde of 1520.

before Caxton and his contemporary, was a partizan of York. But his short account of Henry the fifth contains nothing but encomium. He wrote in Latin.* This brings us up to Walsingham and Otterburn, and the birth of the *New Man*† upon Henry the fourth's death. For Elmham had exceeded them in the marvellous, and had gone up to the very seat of the Muses ; having made *night change into day, and darkness into light*. And here perhaps the reader will be well pleased to take leave of our **Chroniclers**.

It is obvious that the love of the marvellous in the passages quoted has possessed them all. Having once caught hold of the *new birth* of the penitent it was too good to be given up, and descended from one to another, as it were by unction. But Holinshed, writing while a popular comedy on the subject was in

* Hist. Regum Angliæ edit. Hearne in Hen. 5.

† Page 30, 110, 115, before.

vogue, gave a general currency to the fable past all cure. Thus are Chronicles compiled; and length of time, which helps to confound them all, serves also to make them venerable. I wish there were an ivy in historical learning, to grow upon the rude monuments of its infancy, and hide their awkward projections under a simple evergreen. If any one of these makers of characters had gone to the true sources of information, the *res gestæ* of their subject, it is impossible that such trash could have been preserved in their compilations. We should not have been "mocked and deluded all this while (to use a sentence of Milton's*) with ragged notions and babblements." But if, according to Hardyng, he was

A new man made by all good regimence,
the true receipt for this composition must be followed. The first essential of such

* Tractate of Education.

regeneration, according to *good regimence*, is the recovery from sin and wickedness. But how can this be without such previous sin? The sin therefore must be established and fixed by the same chronicling prescription; and thus the regeneration, by rule of reverse, becomes evidence of the fact from which it ought itself to spring.

If the young prince was given to dissipation and lasciviousness, when not engaged in arms, as we are told he was by the only writer who can require our belief, we must give it in his measure. Elmham is he. In him it is free from all degrading circumstances. There is neither low company, nor profligate companions mentioned by him, nor by T. Livius his copier, nor by Hardyng Otterburn and Walsingham who succeeded them, nor by Rous the Yorkist who came next, nor by Caxton or Polydore. Fabian the Alderman of London, and chronicler of its Mayors and Sheriffs, seems

to have been the leader in this line of accusation. But as he knew nothing at all of the Prince's good deeds, and nothing of his life before his accession but the tale of his bad company, he merits little regard. He gives no voucher for his charge of *all vice and insolency*, and we know that his betters had not gone so far.

Being then dissipated as a youth, Henry must have had companions of his pleasures. It does not follow that they were abandoned or vicious or low. The associates of one of his warlike disposition were probably military men, whose habits frequently lead them to dissipation. If at this age the feathers of his crest played wantonly over his brow, we are not obliged to add ungracefully. And he must have been dextrous too in finding play time, in that hardy and busy course of martial life in which he was employed. The only passages to be found on this subject in any of the authors quoted, that

merit attention, describe his companions as *young lords and gentlemen*. Stow makes use of that description in the only frolick he relates. And though he preserves the story of dismissing his former companions, he calls them by that phrase, as *the followers of his young acts*; and adds that he was willing to keep about him still, in his state of royalty, such as would *change their manners*. We have no authority for believing that there was any thing base or degrading in his associates. They who attribute such courses to Henry of Monmouth, wrote after the theatres had exhibited his character in a dress of their own, at a time when indecency and grossness of manners prevailed in all stage exhibitions. Falstaff and Poins and Peto are his companions there.

But the only vicious character we read of, and actually know to have been his companion, was the Duke of York;*

* Bef. pa. 58, Speech to the Parliament.

who indeed had once degraded himself even to infamy. But the effects of this connection were extraordinary, and to the honour of the parties so concerned. The *youth* was not tainted, and the *elder* was reformed. Our Prince restored him to honour in every sense of the word, and to the useful service of his country.

Take the reflection made upon his vices by our first author his contemporary.* “They did not even for a moment, let down the magnanimity of his character.” The author of one of the finest pieces of writing in our language,† who has made it convey to Princes some useful lessons on their failings, has illustrated this sentiment in the happiest manner, and by examples of the highest note. He distinguishes justly between the vices or failings that degrade a Prince, and those which by not shewing them-

* Bef. pa. 11.

† Lord Bolinbroke. Idea of a Patriot King.

selves in any scandalous appearances, are lost in the lustre of bright and shining qualities. Our Henry seems to have been a fit example for his text, while on the stage of life and before he filled the stage of fancy, as good as those he produces to inforce his moral, of Cæsar and Scipio and Henry the fourth of France. After observing that Princes are exposed to more and stronger temptations than other men, he adds. "The elevation in which they are placed, as it gives them great advantages, gives them great disadvantages too that often countervail the former. Thus for instance, a little merit in a Prince is seen and felt by numbers : It is multiplied as it were, and in proportion to this effect his reputation is raised by it. But then a little failing is seen and felt by numbers too : It is multiplied in the same manner, and his reputation sinks in the same proportion."

I have named the Duke of York as his only companion, whose name has been handed down to us authentically. If we

could rely upon Hall,* we might add to him Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham; and I have found instruments in Rymer that induce me to do so. Hall relates the beginning of the persecution of the Wickliffites, whose chief that nobleman was, in the first year of his reign. He calls him a valiant captain and hardy gentleman, accused to the Archbishop; *who knowing him to be highly in the King's favor*, informed the King of it. The King wished to save him, and in private discourse endeavoured to reclaim the strayed sheep, for which Oldcastle was very grateful; but his zeal and firmness rendered the King's endeavours vain. Henry finding him determined, judged it necessary to yield to the Archbishop's request, and he was left to the rigour of the ecclesiastical law. He appears to have been one of the distinguished warriors of Henry the fourth's

* Pa. 48. new edit. 4to.

reign, and served in the Welsh war under the Prince of Wales from the beginning.* I conceive therefore that here the intimacy was formed, with him as well as the Duke of York. When afterwards the King sent an aid to the Duke of Burgundy in 1411, as before related,† he was one of the principal commanders of the expedition. Perhaps the circumstance of the troops being led by officers in the Prince's favour, or of his recommendation, occasioned Elmham and others to write that *he* had been applied to for them.

Oldcastle's history is well known, and the criticks on Shakespear have taken pains to discover every part of it,‡ in order to account for his being brought on the stage in the Prince's company, as

* 8 Rym. F. 331. and 498.

† Pa. 50.

‡ See Malone's note to the epilogue of 2d pt. Hen. 4. and the 2d scene of 3d act; and Steevens's to the title-page of Hen. 5. with Malone's observations on the first part.

he is in the old play of Henry the fifth. The above passages may serve to be added to their notes. There were probably some stories of his wit or wagghery towards the Prince preserved in tradition, which the players caught up. But his real character becoming better known by the popular history of the reformation, in which his suffering for the doctrines of Wickliffe made a conspicuous figure, it acquired the ascendancy over the false one brought on the stage; the reverse of which has happened to that of our Prince. Steevens has produced the prologue to a play called Sir John Oldcastle, published in 1600 under Shakespear's name (now rejected from his works) which proves that the writer was anxious to clear himself from the suspicion of exposing the real Oldcastle to laughter, and that the audience of that time would have been displeased with such freedom. He therefore represents him as "A valiant martyr and a virtuous Peer."

If Henry the fourth was suspected of having imbibed from his father that heresy not to be absolved, of wishing to lessen the overgrown possessions of the clergy, Oldcastle openly declared that desire, and endeavoured to carry it into effect; and at the same time embraced with zeal the religious tenets of Wickliffe. But the King took care afterwards to accommodate his principles to the church, for which her members repaid him amply both in money and good will. I suspect that some youthful levity of expression leaning that way may have escaped Prince Henry, which was hastily caught up and remembered against him; and his intimacy with the Lollard knight would help to fix the imputation of his favouring the sect. If this conjecture,* for it is no more,

* It is worth noticing in this place that Wickliffe had belonged at first to Queen's College Oxford, where we are told some of his followers resided. In his

should be true, we might conclude that he took pains to make the declaration of his abhorrence of that sect as publick as possible, in order to remove any such opinion. I cannot think that mere irregularity of life in a young prince, would have appeared to the corrupt monks of that age, so heinous as to require all the severe mortification ascribed by them to his marvellous repentance.

V. The Prince offended his father and embittered his last days.

I BELIEVE that he might to a certain degree; not by his vices, but by great and shining qualities, and the popularity attending upon them. It is difficult to account for the proceedings in parliament recited in pp. 58, 65, 6, unless we suppose the King jealous of the fame and influence of his son. On the other hand, if that

day, Oxford was distinguished for favouring his doctrines. He died in 1384.

were the case, the Speaker's conduct may at once be explained. The commons take their favourite's part, and urge their sovereign to do him the honour which they believe unjustly withheld, by the King's fears of him and them. We should have lost some admirable scenes* if Shakespear had thought so. Yet we may still have the enjoyment of them without being obliged to call for proofs.

Young Henry's interposition (as in pa. 58,) in the Duke of York's favour, against whom the King seems to have been incensed, must have been disagreeable to his father; but no man will be inclined to blame the Prince for this or accuse him of undutiful behaviour. On the contrary, he seems to deserve praise for generosity and gratitude towards a Prince of his blood and fellow soldier who had been unduly slighted.

It was the rare fortune of Henry the

* Second part H. 4. act 4. sc. 10, 11.

fourth to have four sons who were all youths of fine parts and great abilities. He made use of them accordingly in the service of the state, and they appear to have assisted their father in such employment in an early stage of life. But if this condition of a family is to be envied, it is likewise subject to danger and inconvenience, especially in that of a sovereign, by producing rivalship and hatred, and their evil consequences among courtiers and dependents. The domestick lot of Edward the third, both good and evil in this respect, descended upon his grandson of Lancaster, and forms a remarkable occurrence in the history of man; by presenting two such fine generations from the same stock so near together. So much for the honour of Plantagenet. Yet John of Gaunt was suspected of designs against the succession of his nephew, son of his renowned elder brother; and Thomas of Clarence was said to have caused or

fomented his father's suspicions of Henry of Monmouth. The good sense and open heart of the latter dissipated their effects for the time; but if the King had lived much longer, they might have produced more evil than happened in the grandfather's days.

Young Henry's temper led him to take the following course to cure his father's jealousy and defeat the faction that promoted it. When he found their measures against him strengthened by the King's favour, he suddenly drew together all his friends and dependents from different parts, of whom he formed a large train richly dressed, and with them proceeded as in parade to the Court which was then kept at Westminster, to demand a public audience of the King, that he might in the most public manner justify himself and confound his enemies. It had the usual effect of bold and direct measures that are founded in justice. The Prince openly

called upon his father to clear him from the accusations of his enemies, the Court slanderers were abashed, and the King was obliged to see his son's character with his own eyes, and acquit him. This transaction happened in the summer next before the King's death; and is described at length by Holinshed, with many formal and some fabulous particulars,* according to the times, with orations from the father and son.† But he concludes with the sensible reflection upon the Prince's conduct before cited.‡

What Otterburn has written upon this adventure is fit to be introduced here, for it seems to lead to a very probable cause of the disagreement between the father and son. According to him the King had been persuaded by the Prince's

* *And inconsistencies*, I might have added. For he begins with *the tales* that caused the King not to favour Henry *as in times past*.

† New 4to. edit. V. 3, p. 53.

‡ Pa. 113. See the Note at the end.

enemies to confer upon Clarence the conduct of a new expedition to France, in favour of the Duke of Orleans, while the troops before sent to the Duke of Burgundy against him were still in France upon that service. If, as some write, this measure had been advised and planned by Prince Henry, it was natural that the sudden change to a contrary course, and against his advice; or with a view to thwart him, and strengthen the party of his younger brother and rival, should have offended and irritated him.

The reader would startle if I should add a chapter here under the following head, viz. *The Prince of Wales his father's favourite son*. I shall therefore only hint, that I could maintain this argument by a strong piece of evidence of the highest authority; stronger than any that has been brought to prove the contrary. The Will of Henry the fourth* dated 21 Jan. 1408, (1409 N. S.) after the debates

* Nichols Collect. of Roy. Wills, p. 204, 5.

in parliament before mentioned in p. 58, and after the Prince had left his command in Wales, and may be supposed to have resided more in London and to have been guilty of irregularities, if ever he was, this Will names him in an affectionate manner, and him only of all the children. The King particularly recommends to his care to provide for three of his servants who had deserved well; and then makes him his executor in the following words (in modern spelling.) “ And for to execute this testament well and truly, for great trust that I have on my son the Prince, I ordain and make him my executor of my testament foresaid, calling to him such as he thinketh in his discretion that can and will labour to the soonest speed of my Will comprehended in this my testament. And to fulfil truly all things foresaid I charge my foresaid son upon my blessing.”

It does not affect the present point to add, that the King appears to have made

another Will afterwards, wherein he appoints some of his privy council for his executors; for he names the Prince and Archbishop of Canterbury to be their *Supervisors*, according to the custom of that period. The copy of this Will, if it exists now, has not been published. My account of it is taken from the Parliament Rolls, vol. 4, p. 5, n^o. 13.

I have a few grains of blame, but mixed with praise, to bestow upon Shakespear before I conclude. I cannot forgive him for the quibbling lie, which he makes the young Prince tell the Sheriff, in order to stay the pursuit of justice for the robbery. And whenever I have seen it on the stage, I have observed the same feeling in the audience. This perhaps is his own, and if so may be imputed to the manners of his early life. Yet it is as inconsistent with the becoming grace and dignity and propriety which he generally

gives to his high characters, as with the real character of the Prince. This and the Princess Katherine's french are fit only for the *groundlings* of his *wooden O*.

He could not but believe, as the best of his contemporaries did, in Holinshed's account of the transactions which are made the subject of his plays. Malone has shewn that he always follows that author in the historical dramas.* We should therefore admire the dexterity with which he takes every occasion to set off the young Prince's character to the best advantage, and to cover his faults. In the first mention of him by his father,† "Can no man tell of my unthrifty son?" (for Shakespear supposes him a man grown at this time) where he is made to complain of his *loose companions*, who beat the watch, and rob passengers, the King concludes thus—

"As dissolute as desperate; yet thro' both.

* See 12. Reed, p. 293 in Henry 5.

† Rich. 2, act 5, sc. 6.

I see some sparks of hope, which elder days
May happily bring forth"*

In the introductory scene to the robbery, he makes the Prince reflect upon the disgrace he is going to incur in such company,

" I know you all, and will awhile uphold
The unyoked humour of your idleness.
Yet herein will I imitate the Sun,—

— — — — —
So when this loose behaviour I throw off,
And pay the debt I never promised—"

So in Vernon's report of his interview with the King and Prince,† he is made to say of the latter's sending Hotspur a challenge,

" He made a blushing cital of himself,
And chid his truant youth with such a grace.—"

* Which words Dr. Johnson, on Shakespear's authority, seems to have received for good history; and therefore calls *a very proper introduction to the future character of Henry the fifth.*

† 1st Hen. 4, act 5, sc. 4.

Again, to relieve him from an illnated insinuation of his brother Clarence's to the King, who is incensed by it, Warwick makes the speech beginning thus,

“ My gracious lord, you look beyond him quite.
The Prince but studies his companions,
Like a strange tongue, &c.——”*

and assures the King that it will end to his honour.

These passages shew that Shakespear seemed to struggle against believing the current stories of misconduct as much as he could, that he might not let the Prince down to their level.

The Brotherhood of Shakespear's editors must not be passed by without censure, for putting forth such an abundance of illustrations of their author's plays, without ever noticing the injustice done to the character of one of the great-

* 2d Hen. 4, act 4, sc. 8.

est among the English princes, in the Plays before us. Especially when we consider the extraordinary labour of their multitudinous notes. This may be wondered at in Steevens, who was a great reader of English history and a diligent observer. Although he gives many notes to correct mistakes of dates and persons wrongly introduced, he seems never to have observed the capital error relating to Henry the fifth.

He has one note only to this effect,* where upon the authority of Sir J. Hawkins, the deviation from history respecting Chief Justice Gascoigne's surviving Henry the fourth is corrected; but though Sir Thos. Elyot's whole chapter is there recited, it was left to Malone to notice the mistake as to the Prince's striking him, who notwithstanding thinks it necessary to quote Speed upon the fact.

* Johns. and Steev. edit. v. 5, p. 588.

Malone likewise has one note, to correct Shakespear's mistake of the Prince's age in the King's speech before quoted in p. 141, when, he observes truly, he could not be more than twelve years old.

The following Summary of Dates of the principal events and transactions in this Essay may be found useful.

A. D. 1387. Henry V. born, 9th August.

1399. Knighted in the field by Richard II.
in Ireland, in his 12th year.

— In the same year created Prince of
Wales.

1402. Attended the army against Scotland.

1403. Made King's Lieutenant of Wales.

— 21st July, wounded in the battle of
Shrewsbury.

1408. Left Wales, where he had conducted the war and government for five years.

1409. President of the Council, and en-

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gaged in the chief business of
State and Parliament.

1410-11, Warden of the Cinque Ports, Cap-
tain of Calais, and repeatedly
thanked by the Commons for his
services.

1413, Succeeds to the Crown.

Note for page 137.

THERE is a circumstance so particularly related in the chronicles upon this occasion; as to require a little antiquarian illustration, which I shall offer here. Young Henry's dress is thus described by Holinshed. "He was apparelled in a gown of blue satin full of oilet holes; at every hole the needle hanging by a silk thread by which it was sewed. About his arm he wore a hound's collar set full of SS. of gold, and the tîrets likewise of the same metal."

Holinshed offers no remark upon this dress, which by describing so minutely he must have thought extraordinary. Stow quotes Otterburn for the story, and thinks it necessary to name his author, as one who had been informed of it, *by the Earl of Ormond, an eye-witness of the same.* Whatever the cause may have been, we must perhaps remain ignorant of it, unless what follows should serve for an explanation. In the Gentle-

man's Magazine of March 1756, there is a well written letter from Oxford, attempting to do this from the customs of Queen's College, in which the Prince had been a student ; and to shew that he may have designed to please his father by appearing in a dress that would remind him of that College, and of the time he passed there.

I have mentioned the subject to some of my acquaintance who belonged to this College ; and have been honoured with a letter from the Provost containing the following information. "On New Year's day the Bursar presents to every one who dines in the hall a silk-threaded needle, and says to him, *Take this and be thrifty*. But no such ceremony is prescribed in the statutes, and neither the date nor the occasion of introducing this custom is known. The general opinion is that it originally bore an allusion to the founder's name, *Eglesfeld* from *aignille* and *fil*. And the story told by Holinshed has been considered as an argument in support of the tradition, that Henry the fifth had a part of his education in this house.

There is no reason to impeach the testimony of Rous as to this fact ; in addition to which, there is the constant tradition, that Henry lived in the chamber over the great gate of the Col-

lege, which had been before occupied by the Black Prince, and which was taken down about sixty years ago. In this chamber was a portrait in glass, apparently very ancient, of Henry the fifth, together with that of Cardinal Beaufort.

In another part of the College there is an inscription on glass, relating that Henry the fifth had studied there."

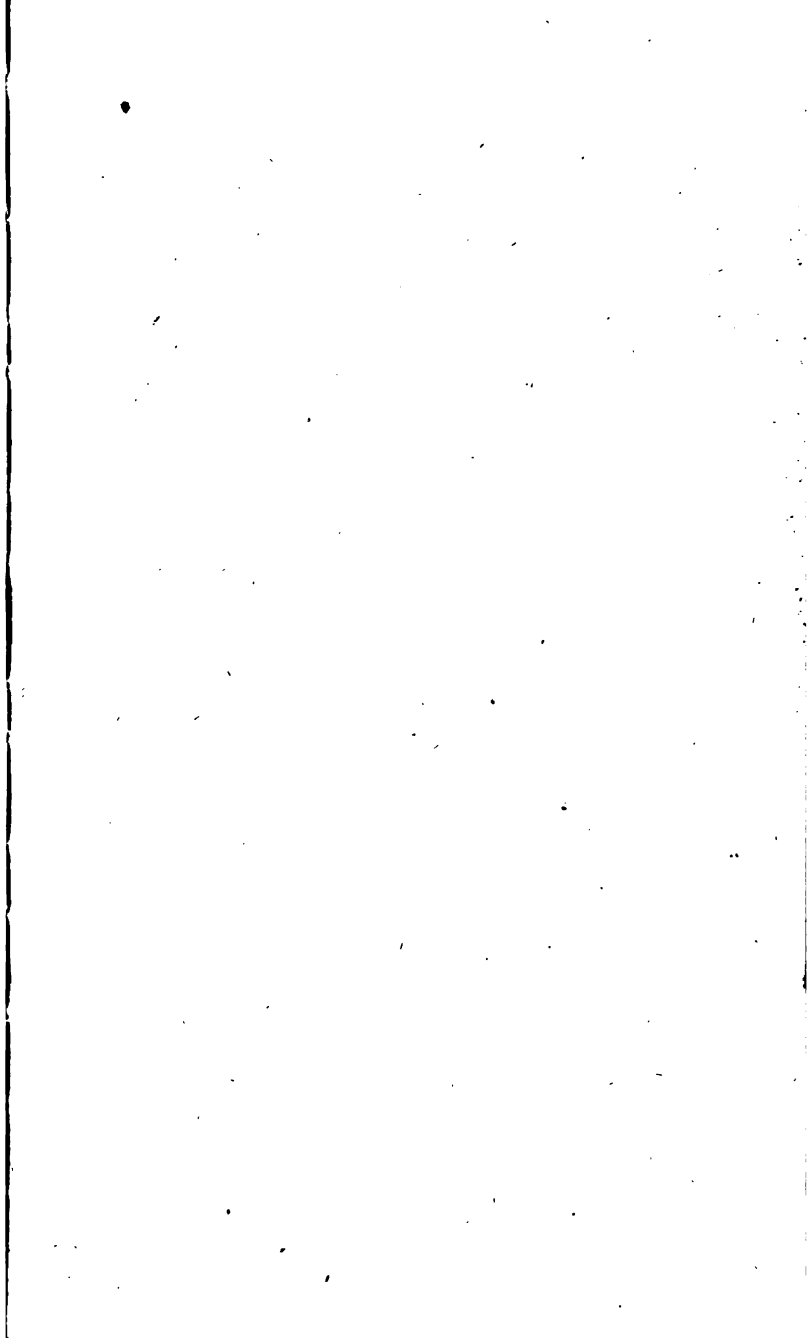
From the summary of dates* of the principal events of his life, it may be seen that there was time for his residing at Oxford from 1399 to 1402, not filled up in the account, from the 12th to the 14th year of his age. At this period Henry Beaufort Bishop of Lincoln† was Chancellor of Oxford, not having succeeded to Winchester till 1404, upon the death of W. of Wickham. I cannot learn that there is any tradition at Oxford of a peculiar dress like that above described, either in Queen's College or any other ; but it seems reasonable to assign it to the ceremony practised there, and to the motive supposed by the writer in the Magazine.

An inaccurate phrase in Stow's Chronicle

* See p. 145.

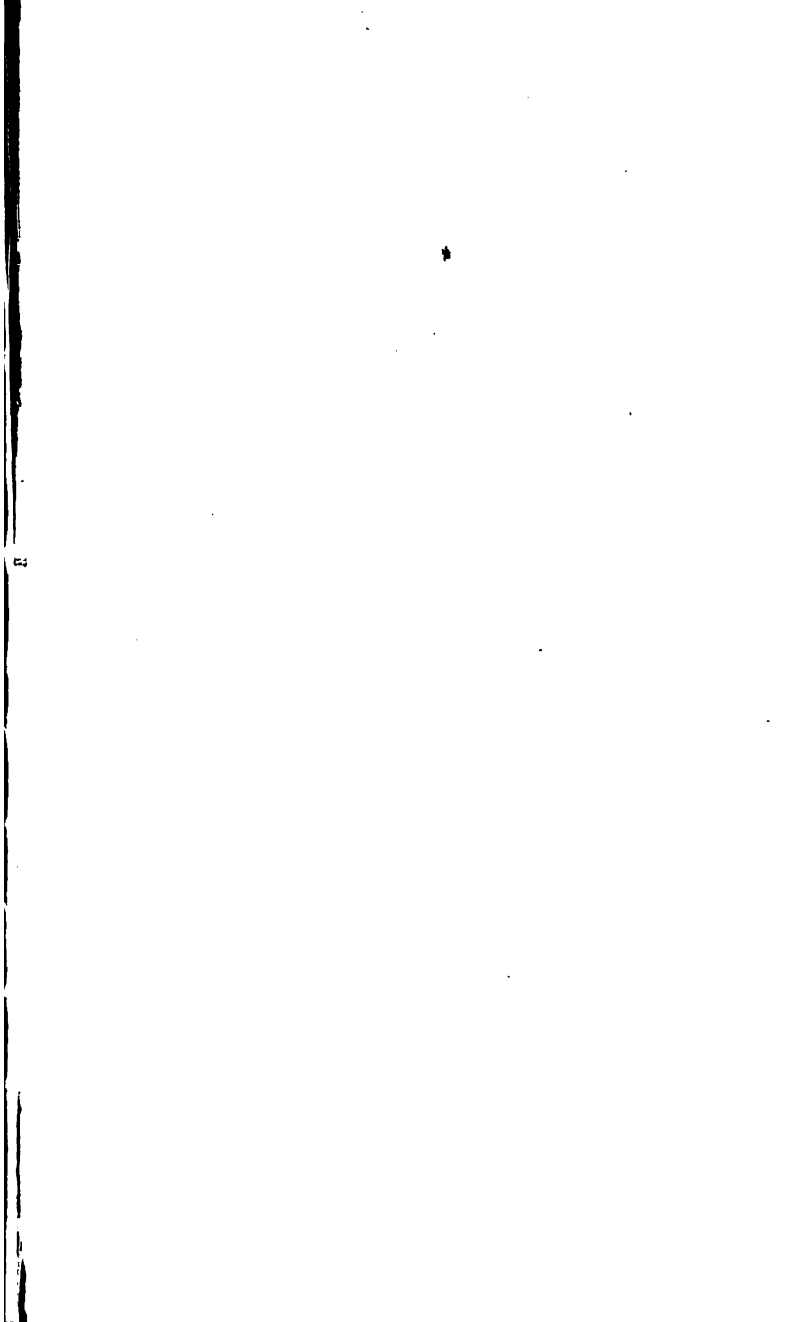
† See in Twyne's Antiq. Acad. Oxon. Apol. the citation from Rous.

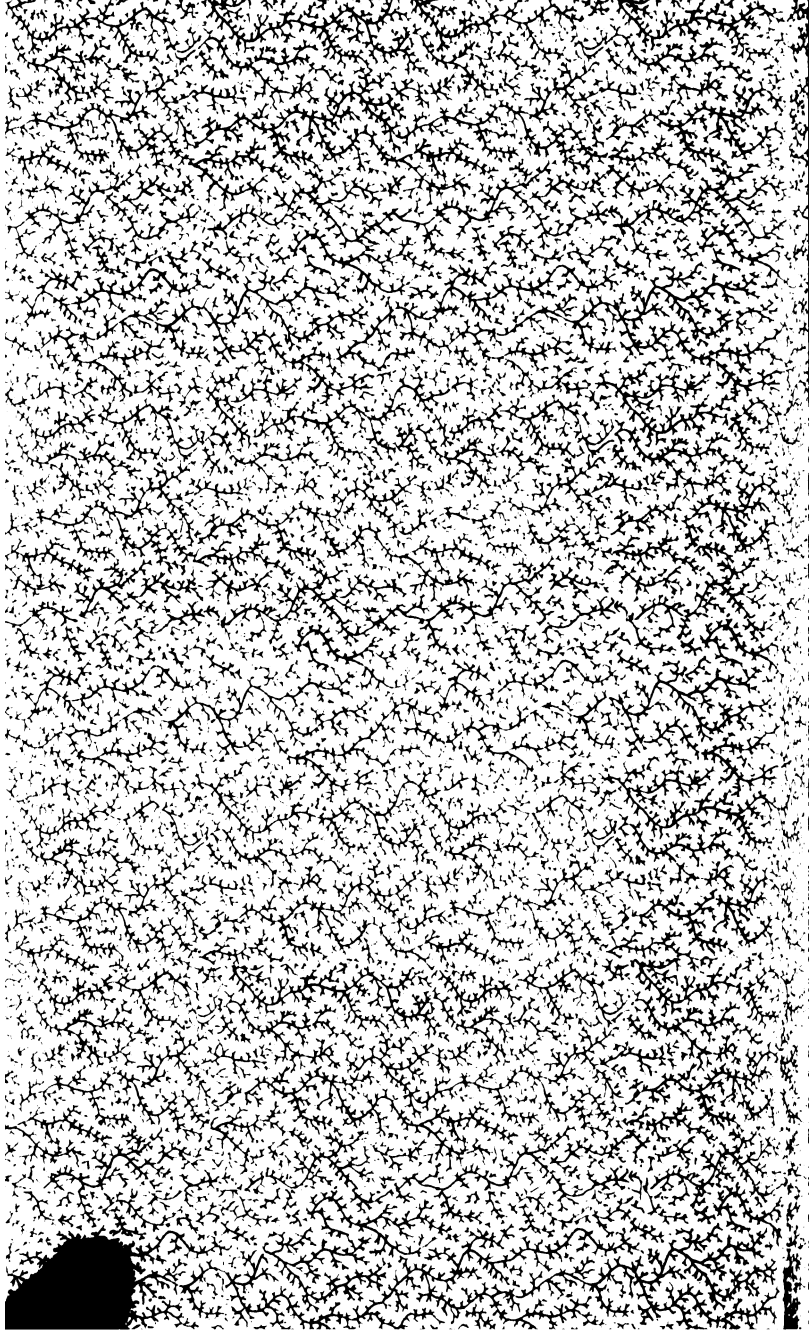
(copied, perhaps, from one much older) has led to a mistake in some accounts of Oxford; in which the young Prince is said to have belonged to New College, because Stow writes that he studied at *the new College*. But many Colleges have been called *new*, with respect to the rest, for some time after their first erection, and this was the case of Queen's.



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